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## ROYALTY *on the* FIRING LINE

by Winthrop Biddle



"FIRST in peace, first in war," is the motto of the reigning houses of Europe, traced by their swords on the crimsoned soil of many a hard-fought battle-field since the War of the Nations set thrones aquake. Whatever may be the foibles of royalty, cowardice cannot be reckoned among them in the light of the wanton bravery which half the princes of the Continent have shown amid the shock of action.

There used to be a tradition that the place for military chiefs in high command is well within the zone of safety in the rear of contending armies. But in the present conflict this tradition has been shattered. Reigning sovereigns, heirs to thrones, grand dukes, and lesser princelings whose name is legion took their posts at the front with the first

blast of the trumpet. In many cases these royalties not only joined the vanguard, but forged forward to the first line of fire.

Majesties, royal highnesses, and high-born excellencies have convinced the world that they are no mere puppets, bespangled with gold lace and adapted only to the pleasant task of battenning upon the toil of the masses. They have demonstrated that they are red-blooded men, just as willing as the multitude to meet death with calm devotion to a cause. Even admitting that the cause is a selfish one, and that the nobilities of the Old World are fighting for the existence of the doctrine of divine right itself, the defenders of the monarchic principle have exhibited a heroism which cannot fail to be credited to them on the day of reckoning—if such a day be



MARIE ADELAIDE, GRAND DUCHESS OF LUXEMBURG, TRIED TO PREVENT THE INCURSION OF THE GERMANS INTO HER TERRITORY BY BARRING THEIR WAY WITH HER CAR ON THE ADOLPH BRIDGE

looming up behind the veil of the immediate future.

Perhaps the most romantic royal figure of the war is Marie Adelaide, the young grand duchess of Luxemburg, who achieved fame as the Barbara Frietchie of the great conflict that is convulsing Europe. When the German advance column began the invasion of the grand duchy, thus committing the initial violation of the neutrality of a neighboring state, the little sovereign tried to bar the way of the invaders with her car on the Adolph bridge on the way to the capital.



ALBERT, KING OF THE BELGIANS, DEFENDER OF LIÈGE AND COMMANDER OF THE FIGHTING RETREAT TO ANTWERP, IN THE COURSE OF WHICH HE EXPOSED HIMSELF RECKLESSLY TO THE ENEMY'S FIRE

Standing up in the automobile, the young ruler of just twenty years faced the head of the advancing column with angry eyes.

"Stop!" she commanded. "You shall not march into my country."

There was a moment of hesitation. Veteran officers gasped with astonishment. Then the German commander, spurred to action by his chagrin, pointed his revolver at the grand duchess and advised her to "go home quietly."

Confronted with an overwhelming preponderance of hostile troops, Marie Adelaide ordered her



PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES OF HESSE, WOUNDED IN THE BREST IN SEPTEMBER, IN THE COURSE OF THE DESPERATE BATTLES TO TURN THE LEFT WING OF THE ALLIES BEFORE THE FORTIFICATIONS OF PARIS



GRAND DUKE PETER NICHOLAIEVITCH, BROTHER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND ONE OF THE TEN MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL FAMILY WHO PROMPTLY TOOK THEIR PLACES AT THE FRONT



chauffeur to proceed; but the moral force of her protest against German aggression in the face of Europe won for her the title to being the bravest, as she is admittedly the most beautiful, sovereign in the world.

Among the royal personages who have displayed conspicuous gallantry, none stands higher than King Albert of the Belgians, whose presence in the fortifications of Liège inspired the Belgian army in its desperate resistance to the German invaders; who was frequently seen in the trenches before Namur; who shared all the privations and toil of the retreat upon Antwerp, fighting every foot of the way, and who led sorties out of the great stronghold on the Scheldt.

The story is told — and it bears every mark of authenticity — that the young king of the Belgians, in a dramatic attempt to relieve Malines, had a narrow escape from being torn to pieces when a shell burst ten feet from the automobile from which he was commanding his forces and ripped off the rear wheels of the car.

King Albert, who is known as the handsomest sovereign in Europe, has demonstrated brilliant qualities of military leadership. He is personally responsible for the degree of preparedness which enabled Belgium to play so important a part in the first phase of the conflict. It was to the king's insistent demands that Belgium owes the possession of the forces of defense which have attracted universal attention.

This policy of warlike efficiency the king practically forced upon the nation in the face of bitter opposition in Parliament. Now he is the idol of his people, who have



PRINCE FREDERICK WILLIAM OF GERMANY, HEIR TO THE GERMAN THRONE, REWARDED FOR GALLANTRY IN ACTION AND ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING FIGURES ON THE TEUTONIC SIDE OF THE WORLD-CONFLICT

been convinced by the sharp struggle last August that their sovereign was right in insisting that a treaty of neutrality was no sufficient guarantee of territorial inviolability in the present anarchic state of Europe.

Crown Prince Frederick William of Germany is another striking personage among the royalties who have cast their valor in the scales of Mars in an eager attempt to



PRINCE ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT, A COUSIN OF THE KING OF ENGLAND, ON ACTIVE DUTY AS A NAVAL COMMANDER IN THE NORTH SEA, WHERE THE BRITISH FLEET HAS BEEN CRUISING

*From a photograph by W. & D. Downey, London, England*



PRINCE LOUIS, SON OF THE REIGNING PRINCE OF MONACO, HAS ENTERED THE FRENCH ARMY AS A LIEUTENANT. HE IS KNOWN AS "MONSIEUR DE MONACO"

*From a photograph by Numa Blanc, Monte Carlo*



PRINCE LOUIS OF BATTENBERG, FIRST NAVAL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY, ONE OF THE DEFENDERS OF THE BRITISH ISLES IN THE NAVAL OPERATIONS WHICH ARE AIMED AT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GERMAN FLEET

*From a photograph by Lafayette, London, England*



GRAND DUKE CYRIL, SON OF VLADIMIR ALEXANDROVITCH, UNCLE OF THE CZAR OF RUSSIA, IN DISFAVOR BECAUSE HE HAD MARRIED A DIVORCED PRINCESS, WAS AMONG THE FIRST ROYALTIES TO GO TO THE FRONT

*From a photograph*

achieve victory. The oldest son of the Kaiser was in command of an army on the frontier of the grand duchy of Luxemburg at the beginning of the war. He won one of the initial victories for German arms in

Cross of the first and second class, accompanying the act with a message to the Crown Princess Cecilie, in which the Kaiser said:

"I thank thee with all my heart, dear



PRINCE WILLIAM OF LIPPE, ONE OF THE GERMAN COMMANDERS, WAS KILLED IN THE FURIOUS FIGHTING FOR THE POSSESSION OF THE FORTIFICATIONS OF LIÈGE AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFLICT

an engagement with a French force officially estimated by the war office at Berlin to have consisted of five corps.

So delighted was the Kaiser with the achievements of the crown prince that he immediately conferred upon him the Iron

child; I rejoice with thee over the first victory of William. God has been on his side and has most brilliantly supported him. To Him be thanks and honor."

The victories won by the crown prince figured large in the early phases of the



PRINCE HENRY OF HOHENZOLLERN, BROTHER OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR, BELIEVED TO BE IN PERSONAL COMMAND OF THE GERMAN MANEUVERS IN THE BALTIC SEA AND IN THE NAVAL ATTACKS UPON RUSSIA



PRINCE OSCAR, FIFTH SON OF THE KAISER, DECORATED FOR GALLANTRY AS THE COMMANDER OF A REGIMENT OF GRENADIERS IN THE INITIAL SUCCESSES OF THE GERMANS ON THE WESTERN BATTLE-LINE

war. Throughout Germany they appear to have caused an outburst of enthusiasm, and many patriotic Germans were quoting the prediction credited to the Kaiser several years ago: "My son William will be the second Moltke when his time comes." The German crown prince fairly rivaled his father, the Kaiser, in the appeal to popular applause on the eve of the conflict. Press reports of the departure of the first contingent of troops for the French frontier at the end of July indicated that the young prince, who for several years had been accused of indiscreet warlike



PRINCE ALEXANDER OF TECK, BROTHER OF QUEEN MARY OF ENGLAND, RECENTLY APPOINTED GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA, VOLUNTEERED FOR FOREIGN SERVICE AS SOON AS THE WAR BEGAN

*From a photograph by Rita Martin, London, England*

utterances, was the object of plaudits from the crowds in Berlin which were not equaled in the welcome accorded to his parent on the same dramatic occasion. Another of the Kaiser's sons — Prince Oscar — achieved distinction in the preliminary operations on the long line of battle from Belfort to the Atlantic, and his military prowess as leader of a regiment of grenadiers was signalized by his imperial chief as a notable event. In recognition of his success the prince received the Order of the Iron Cross.

Both Prince Frederick William and Prince Oscar, although firm disciplinari-

ans and traditional sticklers for the rights of birth and rank, have shared all the hardships of the campaign with the common soldiers in their respective commands.

The minor princes of the German states have plunged into the war with an ardor no less intense than that of the imperial family. One of the commanding military figures on the side of the dual alliance is Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, who was credited with striking military exploits on the frontiers of Alsace-Lorraine. The Bavarian crown prince was in the vanguard of the resumption of the German ad-



PRINCE ADALBERT, THIRD SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR, ONE OF THE COMMANDERS OF THE FLEET WHICH IS AWAITING A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE AT THE BRITISH NAVY FROM THE BALTIC SEA



RUPPRECHT, CROWN PRINCE OF BAVARIA, LEADER OF THE GERMAN ADVANCE INTO LORRAINE AFTER THE FRENCH ARMY HAD PARTLY ACCOMPLISHED THE TASK OF RECOVERING THE FORMER FRENCH PROVINCE

vance into Lorraine in the latter half of August, when the French, after having partly succeeded in their attempt to take the offensive, were obliged to evacuate their positions in German territory and withdraw to a defensive attitude within the French frontier lines.

Coupled with the official announcement from Berlin that Rupprecht had inflicted a telling blow upon the enemy by the capture of one hundred and fifty cannon, came the spontaneous action of the Kaiser in conferring upon the heir to the throne of the federated kingdom of Bavaria the Order of the Iron Cross, first class, and in conveying the thanks of the empire to Ludwig III, King of Bavaria.

A tragic coincidence of the successes of Crown Prince Rupprecht in the field was the death of his elder son, Prince Luitpold, thirteen years old, from inflammation of the throat. The news of the honor conferred upon him by the emperor and of the death of his son reached the prospective King of Bavaria on the same day when he was pressing upon the enemy in the department of Meurthe and Moselle.



The German royal and princely houses laid down their lives in the first phases of the war in a proportion which compares well with the total losses sustained by the German armies.

The house of Saxe-Meiningen-Hildburghausen is sorely bereaved. Prince Frederick, one of the commanders in the initial movement through Belgium, was killed in the furious assault upon Namur, which



CROWN PRINCE DANILO, OF MONTENEGRO, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MONTENEGRIN OPERATIONS AGAINST AUSTRIA-HUNGARY



PRINCE MIRKO AND PRINCE PETER, YOUNGER BROTHERS OF THE MONTENEGRIN CROWN PRINCE, WHO QUICKLY TOOK THE FIELD IN THE JOINT SERBO-MONTENEGRIN FIGHTING WITH AUSTRIA-HUNGARY ON THE BORDERS OF THE DUAL MONARCHY

resulted in the rapid fall of one of the strongest fortresses in Europe. He died at the head of his troops, following the best traditions of a fighting nobility.

But this was not the end of the toll which death was to levy upon his house. Within two days his oldest son, Prince George, attached to the staff of the Sixth Thuringian Regiment of Infantry, fell near Namur, and the younger brother of Prince George, Prince Ernst, attached to the same regiment, was so gravely wounded that he died in twenty-four hours. The hand of be-

reavement was laid heavily indeed upon Princess Frederick of Saxe-Meiningen in the loss of her husband and two of her three sons, practically in the same engagement. But as if that were not enough, her uncle, Prince William of Lippe, succumbed to a Belgian bullet in the protracted fighting around Liège on August 6.

Another member of the house of Lippe, Prince Herbert, fell in the initial engagements of the German retreat upon the Belgian frontier at the beginning of September.

#### TO THE RESCUE OF THE COLORS

Prince William was one of the earliest royal victims of the war. A soldier who survived the tense moment of warfare in which Prince William lost his life says that to the very last the prince performed the duties of a commanding officer with courage and keen intelligence.

The regiment of which William was in command was surrounded by superior forces of Belgians. At the moment when the situation appeared to be hopeless, reinforcements were seen making their way to the surrounded Germans. The prince, who with his command was lying close to the ground for shelter from the Belgian bullets, raised himself to his knees and pointing to the regimental colors with his sword, gave an order to the color-bearer that he raise the staff in order to attract the attention of the advancing column of relief.

The color-bearer raised the colors aloft and waved the staff in a circle, attracting the attention of the approaching Germans. At the same time the enemy's sharpshooters noticed the movement, and in the swarm of bullets that poured upon the flag the prince was fatally wounded in the breast and throat. His last words, as quoted by the surviving color-bearer, were: "Remember me."

Among the princes who have been highly commended by the Kaiser for their achievements as commanders in the field is Grand Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, a corps commander, who smashed the front of the allies at Maubeuge and pursued the enemy across the Semois and the Meuse in the critical stage of the operations when the Franco-Anglo-Belgian forces indicated an ability to contest the first German advance with a good prospect of success.

On the list of casualties of the German army on its retreat before the Russians in

East Prussia was the name of Prince Joachim, second son of the Kaiser. Prince Joachim, who was on the firing-line with the First Regiment of Foot Guards, in which he was a lieutenant, was hurried to a hospital at Allenstein and from there taken to Berlin. He received an affecting greeting from his mother, the empress.

Prince Joachim, attached to the staff as information officer, had performed a hazardous feat in riding a mile under Russian rifle and artillery fire to report on the progress of the engagement, and had returned unscathed, when the enemy's shrapnel found him. The Kaiser's son was wounded in the thigh, and first-aid was quickly given him by his brother officers, who used the emergency bandage which is sewn inside the blouse of every soldier at the front in the German army.

The young Hohenzollern evidently treated his mishap as a piece of good fortune. To an old palace servant who saw him in the hospital at Allenstein he is reported as saying jocosely: "Am I not a lucky dog?"

The prince, who is twenty-four years old, sent a telegram from Allenstein to his kinswoman, the Grand Duchess of Baden, in which he is quoted as saying:

"God has allowed me to be wounded. Bless Him. I am proud of the day I fell. It was the finest day I have lived."

A second cousin of the Kaiser, Prince Joachim Albert of Prussia, was wounded by a shrapnel bullet in the retreat from Paris. This prince six years ago resigned his commission in the German army upon the request of the Kaiser because of his affair with a music-hall singer.

The hero of a picturesque incident is Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse, the husband of Princess Marguerite, sister of the Kaiser. In an engagement during the severe struggle when the Germans were slowly forcing the allies back on the Franco-Belgian frontier, the wounded color-bearer reeled backward and the colors momentarily fell to the ground. The prince at once dashed forward, seized the flag, raised it up, and carried it forward to victory.

Prince Frederick William of Hesse, son of Prince Frederick Charles, and nephew of the Kaiser, was wounded in the breast early in September, in the desperate fighting precipitated by the offensive move of the allies all along the German line. This

prince, who was not quite twenty-one years old when the war broke out, went to the firing-line as a lieutenant in a Uhlan regiment.

Another prince of the house of Hesse—Prince Frederick, oldest son of Prince Charles—was mentioned in official despatches from the German headquarters on September 10 as being seriously wounded in the fighting in France. He was an officer in the Hanau Uhlans.

Among the British royalties who are taking an active part in the operations is Prince Alexander of Teck, brother of Queen Mary, who was to have taken the post of governor-general of Canada this autumn, but volunteered for foreign service at the opening of the hostilities. Another British prince who went to the front is Prince Arthur of Connaught, a cousin of the King of England, who is a naval commander in the North Sea.

#### ENGLAND'S KING CONTRIBUTES TWO SONS

The British empire greeted with enthusiasm the announcement, in the middle of September, that the Prince of Wales would depart immediately for the front to serve on the staff of Field-Marshal Sir John French, the commander-in-chief of the British forces operating in France and Belgium. The young prince, who holds an active commission in the Grenadier Guards, a few days before his assignment to foreign duty created a furor in London by marching through the streets with his command at the end of a long "hike" for purposes of training in anticipation of duty in the field.

Another son of King George who showed a keen appetite for military life under conditions of warfare is Prince Albert, the next younger brother of the Prince of Wales. Prince George was attached to the battle-ship *Collingwood*, cruising the North Sea in the attempt to carry out the king's command to "capture or destroy the enemy," when he was stricken with appendicitis and hurried to a hospital for an operation. On his recovery, which was rapid, the possible heir to the British throne importuned his physicians for permission to return without undue delay to the fleet.

On the Russian side the movements of the members of the imperial family at the front are shrouded, evidently for strategic reasons, in the deepest secrecy. One imperial figure, however, stands out with stri-

king boldness from the vast mass of men whom the Czar is pouring in a relentless avalanche upon the Germanic world. He is the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaievitch, a cousin once removed of the present Czar, being a grandson of Czar Nicholas I, for whom the reigning monarch was named.

The preliminary operations of the Russian campaign against the German and Austro-Hungarian forces pointed to the conclusion that in the Grand Duke Nicholas the Russian army has an able and resourceful leader. Shortly after the first contact with the enemy on the Galician frontier Nicholas Nicholaievitch and half a score of other grand dukes took their places at the front.

The Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovitch, oldest son of the late Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovitch, an uncle of the reigning Czar, is one of the men closely related to the head of the house of Romanoff who have gone to the front. This prince incurred the displeasure of the Czar by marrying, in 1905, Victoria Feodorovna, the divorced grand duchess of Hesse, and a distant kinswoman. Cyril has been in disgrace since his romantic marriage, and a hope of completely regaining the imperial favor may be one of the motives that will give additional strength to his sword-arm in the pending conflict.

Other grand dukes who are announced officially as having gone to the front are Boris and Dmitri, and Princes Ivan, Oleg, Igor, and Alexander.

#### RUSSIAN GRAND DUKES TO THE FORE

The positions and capacities of the grand dukes who are in the field appear to differ in the present war from the rôles which some members of the imperial family have played in previous conflicts in which they have taken part. There are traditions in the Russian general staff of embarrassing military situations, the result of the participation of grand dukes in the serious business of war. Especially in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, the desire of imperial personages to take part in the operations at the front is recalled among Russian army veterans as involving delicate problems of etiquette and subsistence.

In the present circumstances, there is every reason to believe, the grand dukes are a useful and efficient part of the commanding staff of the armies of the Czar now engaged in the greatest task that has

confronted them in all the history of Russian power.

The Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaievitch is regarded as in a large measure the builder of the Russian army as it is today. He has especially devoted his energies to the development of the cavalry arm of the service, which has given so good an account of itself in the operations along the Austro-Hungarian and East Prussian lines.

Another Slavic contingent of royalty who have emerged into prominence during the wide-spread hostilities are the princes of Montenegro and of Servia. The Montenegrins are fighters by practise and by tradition. The royal family are no exception to the general rule that a Montenegrin must be a soldier, no matter what art of peace he subordinates or neglects.

#### MONTENEGRIN PRINCES FIGHTING

In the operations against Austria the sons of King Nicholas, himself a warrior of renown in two wars against Turkey and the fratricidal conflict with Bulgaria, have taken an active and brilliant part. Prince Danilo, the heir to the crown of Tsrnagora, as the Montenegrins call their mountainous country, is commander-in-chief of the forces which are operating in conjunction with the Servians along the borders of the dual monarchy. He has taken personal part in many engagements, and himself has repeatedly sighted and fired guns against the Austrians.

Princes Mirko and Peter, brothers of Prince Danilo, have yielded in no way to the prospective head of their house in the exploits of war. Peter, in the closing days of August, had a narrow escape from death or capture in the defense of Mount Lov-

tchen, the towering height that stands like a grim sentinel guarding the road from Vienna to Cetigne, the rock-bound Montenegrin capital.

Attacked by a force of ten thousand Austrians, the Montenegrins were on the point of losing the battle and of being cut off from retreat. Two of the defending batteries had been destroyed by the Austrian gunners, and the enemy was overwhelming the Montenegrin position. At this desperate crisis the combined Anglo-French fleet discovered the plight of the Montenegrins, sailed close in to the Adriatic shore, and opened fire upon the Austrian position with such energy that the tide of battle was turned. At the psychological moment in the action Prince Peter and his forces made a final onslaught upon the enemy, with disastrous consequences for the Austrians, if the reports from Cetigne are to be credited at their face value.

On the Servian side the two sons of King George are at the front, and their conduct on the line of fire has earned for them honorable mention from the king, in temporary retirement because of illness. Prince George, who renounced his right to the succession six years ago, has been in command of his regiment, the 18th infantry. He has taken part in several engagements on the Drina and in defense of the capital, Belgrade.

Prince Alexander, who became heir presumptive to the crown upon the withdrawal of his elder brother, has played a much more prominent part in the operations than Prince George. The younger prince is second in command of the Servian forces, with General Radomil Putnik as chief of the general staff.

#### DOWN THE SUN-PATH

THERE'S a wonder singing through me like the glory of the spring-time,

For the wet sand is aglitter with the black and silver weed,

And the morning light aquiver makes the little waves all shiver

And go dancing down the sun-path where the pearl-necked mermaids lead.

Oh, they're leading to an east sea, now to south, and now to westward,

With the spirit of the wander-world a gleaming from their eyes,

And a heart will follow after while a day is glad with laughter,

And the great stars will shine softly out as night climbs up the skies.

E. A. Davis

# S E R V I C E

BY HAROLD TITUS



AND Booth Harlowe had come to this!

Jane Lee stood in the room that served as his office and stared about her, scarce believing. Booth Harlowe, the best man in his class, the young intern on whom all those big New York surgeons had looked with a personal interest, had buried himself in this mess!

Why, it was not a possibility! The man who headquartered in that hole could not be the man she had known!

The cluttered room shocked the young woman physician, fresh from her glittering laboratory with its immaculate up-to-date-ness. The first thought which flashed through her professionally trained mind was that she saw a brilliant career going to waste out here in Hickory Hill, Arkansas; but, striking closer the warmth of her heart, she knew with cruel abruptness that those half dreams of the future they had sketched together back there in the city during the last years of their preparation had been without foundation; or, founded, had suffered the props to be knocked from under.

It came back to her, then, that scene in the Grand Central. He had held her hand tightly at parting and said:

"We'll both find our fields; then I'll make love to you."

He had said it frankly, simply, as though talking of instruments he was to buy, but she knew that it was a wonderful impulse which prompted the declaration. Demonstrativeness had been cloaked by his enthusiasm for his science. Nevertheless it was there, and Jane Lee understood—and thrilled.

She waited for the first year to pass, planning on his promised trip East after the months out there in the West, where he had tried general practise. It had been a long year in some ways. His letters

were infrequent and her work in the institute confining, rigid, giving her little time for other thoughts. And these conditions made her disappointment more keen when he did not come, saying that it would be scarcely human to leave Hickory Hill then. Now, though, she had come to fulfil her part of the compact—for they had sworn alternate visits during those years of finding themselves; and as she looked about and sensed the change that must have taken place in him, she wondered, in that cold way of hers, if it had not all been foolish sentimentality.

Her pride had been touched, moreover. He had not met her at the train. In his place came a tall, heavy-eyed, sallow woman, who directed her to the house. She had referred to Harlowe as "Doc," with a loose familiarity that stung Jane's professional dignity. She could not stay in the stuffy room she had been shown, so she wandered up-stairs where Booth had offices and a sleeping place.

And there the shock had struck her slap in the face. He had told her little of his work here in these swamp lands; she had been utterly unprepared for the squalor of the country through which her train rocked; less so for the appearance of the sordid little town, and now the look of this office completely crushed her; for offices are significant of character.

Clothing hung from nails and chair-backs. Her picture was on his desk in a clutter of dusty papers. His operating-table was piled high with pamphlets. Those last six or eight numbers of a medical review had not been touched. Why, it was—

Then she heard his step on the stair and his voice calling to her. She met him in the doorway, both hands extended.

"Why, Booth!" she cried, stopping short, a catch in her voice where she had meant to open with rebuke.



He had both her hands in his and was muttering under his breath the gladness her coming brought.

"But, Booth!" she went on. "You're—why, you're so thin!"

He released the hands and squared his shoulders, smiling down on her.

"Maybe I'm down a little," he admitted, "but hard as nails! I'll look better shaved."

"Awfully sorry, Jane, I had to miss meeting you," he went on, pulling off the mud-spattered overcoat. "Fractured arm. Boy fell off a horse yesterday afternoon and mother afraid to stay alone while father rode to telephone! Gad, I could have choked 'em! Poor kid; awful mess."

"But, Booth—"

He looked at her, sobering, and took her hands again.

"Why, yes; I suppose I do look tough. But I'm working, Jane, working!"

Some of the old fire in those words, a gladness in his toil that comforted her—and yet it chilled, shattering the remnants of those dreams. This was his life, and yet he was happy in it!

When he had shaved and returned Jane gave him a wondering look and swept a hand in gesture about the office.

"I know," he said with an ashamed little laugh, scratching his head. "It looks fierce, but somehow I never have time to clean up."

The girl walked absently to the table and picked up one of the pamphlets.

"Department of Agriculture—bulletin—drainage," she murmured. Then another, and read: "Cesspools for the Farm," and so on, a dozen or more, her amazement mounting.

"But this stuff," she said with wrinkled brow. "All this—what's it to do with medicine, Booth?"

He gave the short little laugh again.

"I know. Funny, isn't it? Our ideas of values all go to pot and new standards pop up. We start out to do one thing and wind up doing another, all for the same end. You see—"

From below, the woman's voice: "Oh, Doc; somebody here."

And when he had gone down Jane heard a youthful voice crackle:

"Maw's awful sick; reckon you'd better hustle."

He was gone, telling her to rest, for the drive would be an ordeal. She was glad

of the chance. All the enthusiastic hope she had summoned on hearing his voice had departed, and now she was sure that her trip had been inane. Furthermore, it hurt her. Booth Harlowe—and this! Was the man mad?

And that first afternoon was merely a sample of what her days in Hickory Hill were to be. Rain continued; roads he described with profanity. Jane did not offer to go with him, for he it known that the girl, having been trained one-sidedly, was a bit of a professional snob. The community, his office, the class of work were all foreign to her; and, she frankly felt, beneath her. Perhaps Harlowe sensed this; anyhow, he pressed upon her no invitations to ride with him on his far-scattered visits.

They talked nights, while he sat with a hand shading his tired eyes, and Jane Lee tried to bring him back to the man that was with tales of the institute, of the inspiration that came from the great minds there; tried to spur him back to the fiery vigor of the old days, to his consuming ambition to conquer, to do the things he then considered worthy; to strike the high-road which was to lead him to that greatness which created an aura about those men for whom she labored.

"I know," he said appreciatively. "I know. But doesn't it ever get tiresome, just the detail, Jane? Just being an assistant? Statistics and section work?"

She felt quickly resentful.

"Perhaps," she admitted a bit icily; "but if this is general practise, give me the routine!"

He dropped the shading hand and looked at her from out his thin face.

"It struck me that way the first month," he said softly. "And then I commenced to see need, with a big N. I began to read up in those bulletins. I got busy in politics. I—"

"But building cesspools and mixing in politics isn't medicine," she shot back.

He was silent a moment. Then:

"I know; I understand. I couldn't appreciate it myself. But—God, Jane, it's pitiable!" He sat forward in the low chair. "From their State constitution to the stuff they eat they're forty years behind! The average school year is less than a hundred days; illiteracy is the rule, not the exception, in this community. It's awful! It means work!"

"But you fitted yourself for—"

"I know," he said, waving a hand. "For service. And I'm giving it!"

Something in his tone broke through her disappointment in him.

"Aren't you working yourself to death?"

"Maybe," he said. "I should have help." He looked at her meaningly and she dropped her eyes, not wanting to hurt him with the resentment there. "I can't read enough," he went on. "I ought to have somebody helping me. I can hammer it into them if I can only soak it up myself—all this!" He indicated the stack of bulletins.

So he went on, warming to his subject, getting up and walking about.

"And this, you see, is the work I started out to find," he concluded, stopping before her. "I've found it; I want you to find yours, Jane. No, no! Don't think I underestimate the institute. I know—but I think I'm doing more here than I could in a laboratory. My shoulder's against the wheel, you see. I want you to look around and see what I mean—because it's my work—and—"

She averted her eyes again, for she knew what was in his mind; she told herself that it never, never could be. He had abandoned all that he had been, the man she had loved. He had cast his lot away from her!

The rains held on and her stay dragged. She fretted, lost patience. Why, it was degrading, without a redeeming feature!

And Harlowe saw. A doglike resignation came into his face. She was disappointed in him for this; consequently he must admit disappointment in her! He tried to make her understand, but gave it up finally and turned the talk on other things, hiding the pain in his eyes. Oh, she could not see it—yet!

The day of her departure dawned, as had the others, drizzily and gray. He was knocking on her door before light filtered through the curtains.

"I've got to make a long drive," he said. "Won't you come with me—this once? I can make it back in time for your train."

As she coiled her heavy hair and stared at her own girlish face in the mirror she saw the mouth soften. His voice had been wistful, lonely, tired.

The drive through those hills was un-

like anything the girl had ever experienced before. Mud, mud, mud! Rain and dripping trees and ruts and rocks; twisting and turning, climbing up and slipping down. Past squalor and filth.

He talked much to her as they went, but she heard only parts of what he said. She had tried to divorce her innermost feelings from the matter, but the pathos of seeing a man of his potentials plunged into such an existence would not down.

And no more was his mind fully on his own words. A dull ache caught at his throat; he wanted to crush her to him and make her understand, but he knew the girl too well. She must have knowledge come from within; not be impressed by an exterior force. And he despaired.

Their destination: A house of rough lumber divided into two rooms. The doorway a mire in which a sow and her complaining brood wallowed; a barking dog, a cow loose and licking at a window, chickens inside and out!

The boy had typhoid, no mistaking it, and fretted on filthy quilts there in the corner. And across the room, in a tumble of damp blankets, wailed a baby that had yet to see its first six months, face a mass of yellow fever-blisters. The mother coughed as she slatted about, that ominous morning cough. An old, snuff-using woman sat by the red stove and shivered, drawing her unclad feet under her tattered skirt and looking at Jane with witless, bleary eyes. A man with a messy beard raised a bare foot close to Booth's face.

"Look, Doc," he whined, "I done step on a glass!"

"All right," Booth answered absently. "Wash it out—hot water and soap. Then I'll fix it up."

He went quickly from one to another, questioning grimly, contradicting sharply, getting at truth, eyes alert, hanging on every word; administering unhesitatingly.

Then he went outside himself and brought in a wash-tub. Jane listened as he ordered the younger woman about, commanding her to wash bedding, and wash it *clean*. The girl saw how the woman's eyes followed the doctor, how she listened, trying to comprehend, trying to respect; saw how simply he went down to that buried part of her where drowsed emulation and desire, saw him touch upon it deftly, saw the response and the triumphant look of him when it came.

After he had bandaged the man's foot he said: "Now, Jack, come with me."

She saw him take shovel and start through the mire, heedless of wet feet, watched him throw out a little mud, point and explain as to a child, quick, enthusiastic, inspiring; and when they came back she heard him saying:

"Ditch it straight to the hollow and drain the whole thing. And do it now! You hear me?"

"Yaas, Doc; I'll do it to-day; honest, I will."

"Good!" His hand fell on the slacked shoulder and he smiled in a brotherly way.

Then to the woman:

"Where do you sleep?"

She hung her head.

"I thought so," he muttered sorrowfully, and made her look up at him. "I'm coming back to-morrow, and I want to see a bed rigged up in that wagon-shed. I want you to sleep there every night—*every* night. Understand?"

"I'll do it, Doc; I'll do it, I will!"

"That's the stuff!" he cried. "We'll get you stronger if you'll only help us by doing what you're told!"

And to the fevered boy:

"You're not half so sick as you think you are. A big, strapping fellow like you isn't going to let a little fever whip him! I guess not! You're not that sort of a coward. You'll get well. Hear me? You'll get well!"

The young fellow made a sign of recognition.

And bewildered Jane Lee watched Booth go on; heard him evoke promises to house the chickens and pen the pigs, to cleanse the house, to boil the water. He dominated. His thin frame was a vast presence in that sordid room; the glow in his eyes a flaming torch that lighted the way for them. She saw hope come to their faces, and will; saw those awakened responses grow, saw those human beings stir in the quicksands that would claim them.

Her heart began to pump quickly. Back in the institute men had inspired her—but this was different! There was clang and clank and rumble of the Crusades; here it was chivalry—the light, going out to battle darkness!

"Now, Jack, I know what ailed your cotton," he was saying as they passed out to the carriage. "I'm going to read you something about it to-morrow, and you've

got to remember it and tell it to me the next time I come after that so I'll know you've been thinking about it. Bigger crop next year. Got to be. Taxes 'll be higher. We'll have that new schoolhouse in the spring!"

"We shore will, Doc."

"Six months ago he wanted to shoot me because I agitated for a new schoolhouse," he told Jane, and stared grimly up the road as the horses mounted the first rise.

"Are they all—like this?" Jane asked after a mile.

"Not all," he said. "Mostly worse. They've never had help, you see. No one here thinks they need it; no one stops to think that Jack, there, is a father and that consumptive a mother; that the baby will be a voter, if he lives; that the boy with typhoid is almost ready for marriage and can't read a word more than his father can; that the old woman is only an example of what they will be if things don't change."

He threw his shoulders back.

"God, but it's a work!" he muttered.

"You see, now, Jane, why I can't keep my office shipshape. I know—" he hesitated—"I know just how it looks to you; pretty rotten, as though I was slack and careless and shiftless like the rest of 'em. And maybe I am. I don't know. I try to help, try to get to the bottom of things, but I'm so busy chopping off obvious ills that I don't get time to go after the roots."

He drew out his watch. "Hike!" to the horses. "We'll miss Jane's train."

Then no more words for a long, long time. Something choked Booth; he sensed her contempt for his work. He knew how she felt—fresh from that orderly, theory-permeated laboratory. Her mind, like that apparatus, had become a chill, glittering thing, had drawn away from life in its search for it. He pictured her boarding that train and—

Her fingers squeezed his arm.

"Booth," she whispered. "Never mind the train. Let's miss it—and I hope I can keep your office clean. I don't know much, can't do much, but I can read—and help—and maybe—"

"Oh, Booth, don't! I can't get my breath! There"—contentedly—"that's better. I want to stay with you and work with you, because it's real and big and—"

But his lips stole the spoken reasons from his ears.



# WAR MAPS

## WHAT THE NATIONS ARE FIGHTING FOR

*by* Svetozar Tonjoroff



It is the passions of nations that make war; the manifestoes of sovereigns only fix the date for the opening gun. Behind the notes of chancellors, in explanation of the unparalleled struggle which has cast a fresh blot upon the escutcheon of civilization, is the pressure of elemental forces. These forces are born of a heaving confusion of longings and resentments; of just aspirations blocked by might; of age-long racial aims repressed by mailed fists; of imperious ambitions chafing against giant barriers. The political and commercial frontiers of Europe, drawn by victorious swords, show in striking fashion just how the war of to-day is the child of the wrongs, the failures, or the errors of yesterday.

At the opening of the war the immediate issues of the struggle were defined in precise terms by the chancelleries of the nations. With the invasion of the first frontier the scope of the conflict broke these narrow bounds. The question ceased to be whether Serbia had menaced the internal order of Austria-Hungary; whether Austria had threatened the independence of Serbia; whether Russia's championship of the Slavs was sincere or not; whether Germany was justified in replying to Russian mobilization with a declaration of war; whether Great Britain was bound to defend the

violated neutrality of Belgium with force of arms.

All these considerations were swept away by the breath of the first cannon. The formulas of statesmen gave way to vital impulses of peoples. The war became a supreme struggle for the attainment of ideals or the righting of wrongs.

A glance at some of these ideals and wrongs as traced out on the map of Europe will serve to visualize the ultimate issues underlying the most momentous clash of arms in the history of the world.

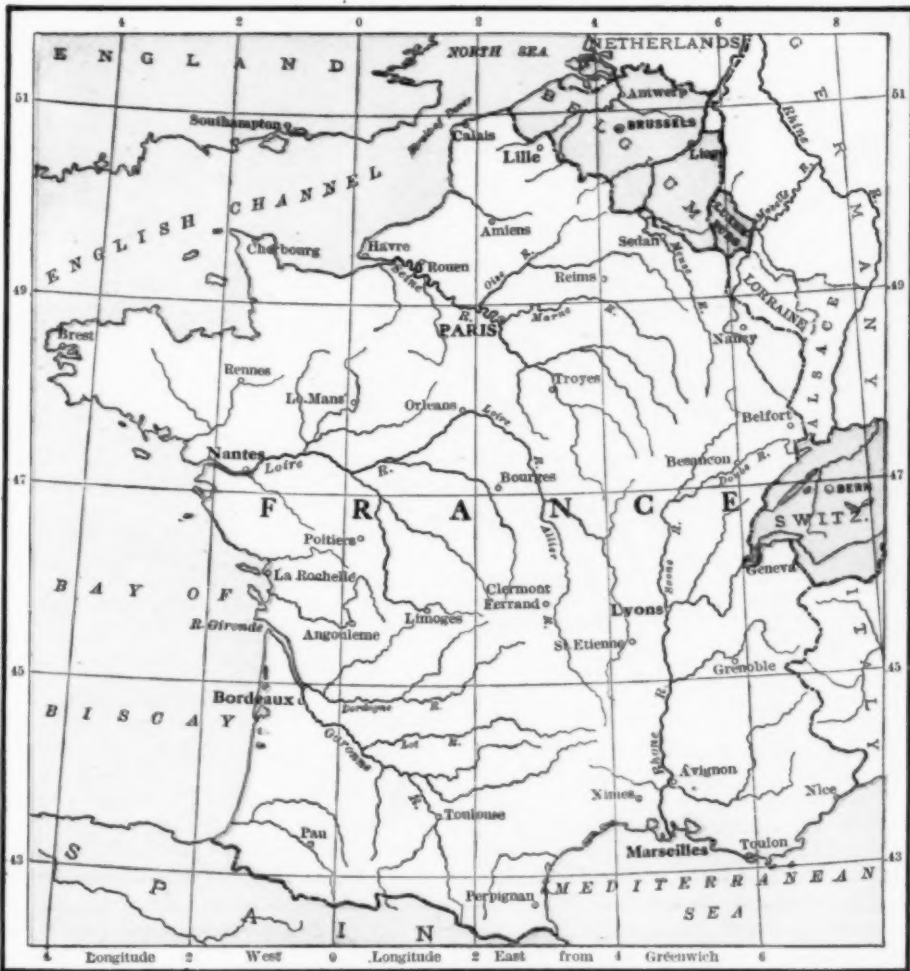
Chief among the factors which for more than a century have been steadily pushing Europe toward a struggle for the survival of the fittest is the rivalry between the East and the West. Russia, as the leading power of the East, has been pressing heavily, with the inert persistence of a glacier, upon the outposts of the West, guarded at one time by France under Napoleon I, then by Great Britain and France in alliance, in the Crimean War of 1854; then by Great Britain in conjunction with Austria and Germany after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, and at the present moment by Germany and Austria-Hungary, with the dual monarchy hard squeezed as a buffer between the two vast opposing forces.

Russia's pressure southward and westward is explained by the elementary considerations of statecraft as well as of hu-

man nature. All northern nations since history began have tended southward, to the warmth of the sun. An open port is an essential necessity to a great empire whose seaways to the markets of the world are closed by ice at the beginning of winter. Locked in the Black Sea by the mandate of the victorious powers after the Crimean War, the Russian giant's line of march toward an all-the-year-round outlet was diverted but not broken. Once more the Colossus of the North plunged against the steel barrier in 1877, when the Russian armies fought their way to Constantinople,

only to face the British fleet with decks cleared for action in Besika Bay. Again the East confronted the veto of the West in its march toward the South.

At this stage of the struggle Western Europe, at the Congress of Berlin, called together to fix the boundaries of Turkey after the Russian assault, interposed Austria-Hungary as the visible obstruction to the southward trend of Russia. After imposing upon Russia a retirement from Turkish territory which she had occupied, Great Britain and Germany, through their respective plenipotentiaries, Disraeli and



WHY FRANCE IS FIGHTING GERMANY SO VIGOROUSLY, AND WHAT THE FRENCH NATION EXPECTS TO RECOVER IF THE ALLIES ARE VICTORIOUS. THE RED LINE AROUND THE BORDERS OF ALSACE AND LORRAINE SHOWS THE TERRITORY WHICH PRUSSIA TOOK AWAY FROM FRANCE IN 1870





RUSSIA'S TERRITORIAL AND POLITICAL AIMS: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GREATER RUSSIAN POLAND BY THE ANNEXATION OF THE GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN PORTIONS OF POLAND, INTO AN AUTONOMOUS UNIT SHOWN BY THE SHADED RED LINE. ALSO THE BLAZING OF A ROAD TO CONSTANTINOPLE BY THE ANNEXATION OF THE INTERVENING TERRITORY, INDICATED BY THE PLAIN RED LINE, OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPLETE RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN THAT REGION TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHER POWERS



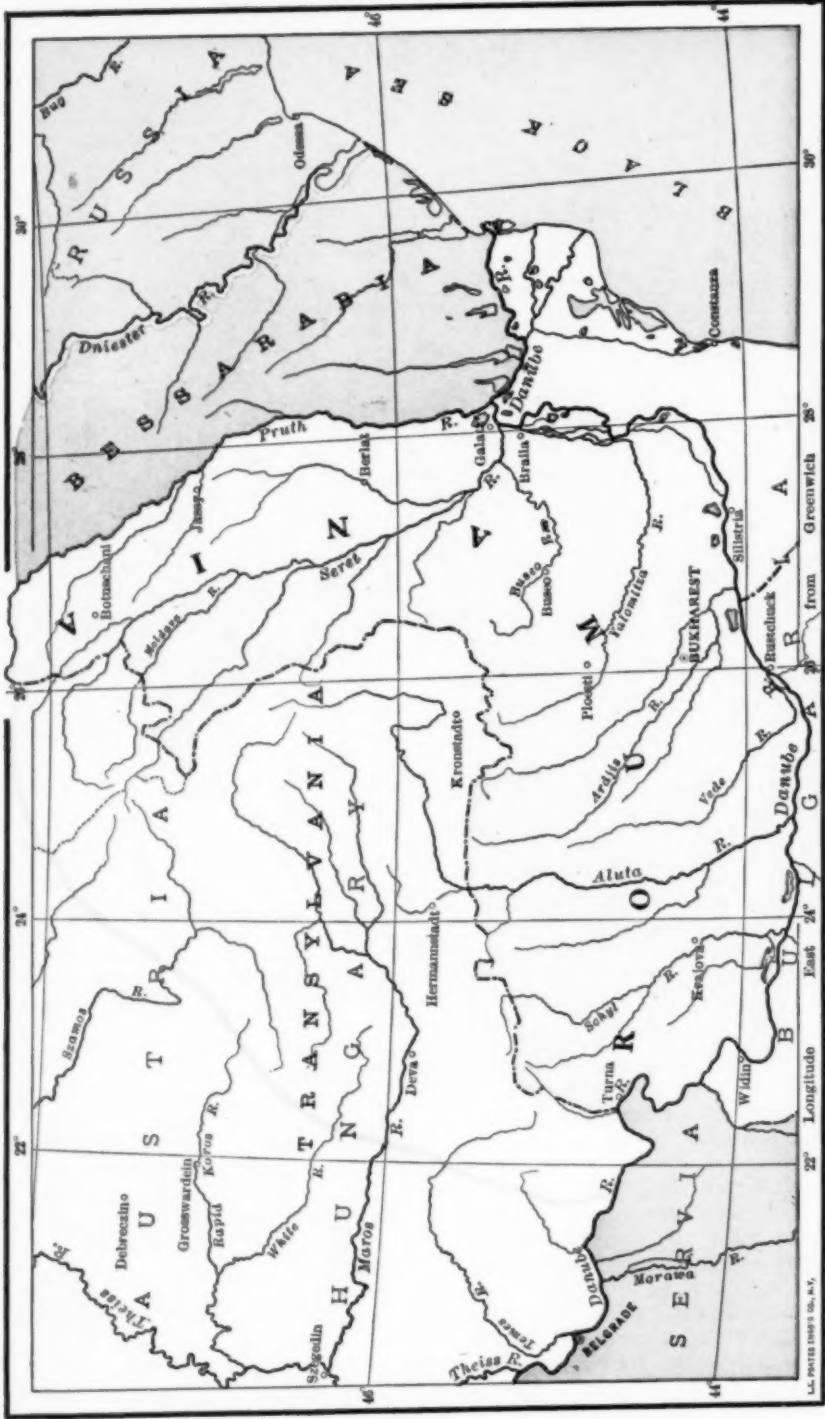
WHAT GERMANY—MEANING THE GERMAN RACE—IS AIMING AT: THE ANNEXATION OF BELGIUM, HOLLAND, AND DENMARK, AS SHOWN BY THE RED LINES, TO ASSURE GERMAN CONTROL OF THE BALTIC AND THE NORTH SEAS, AND A BROAD AUSTRO-GERMAN PATH TO THE TREASURE-LAND OF ASIA MINOR THROUGH SERBIA, MONTENEGRO, ALBANIA, AND THRACE, EITHER BY ANNEXATION OR BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PREDOMINANT INFLUENCE

Bismarck, entrusted to Austria-Hungary the administration of a part of the Turkish possessions in Europe—Bosnia and Herzegovina, now the bone of contention between Austria and Serbia. By this maneuver the Austrian flag was advanced a stage to flank any future Russian march upon Constantinople and the Dardanelles by land. This mandate also had the effect of centering upon Austria the resentment of Russia, formerly directed at England. In other words, Austria took the place of England as the outpost of the West against the encroachment of the East.

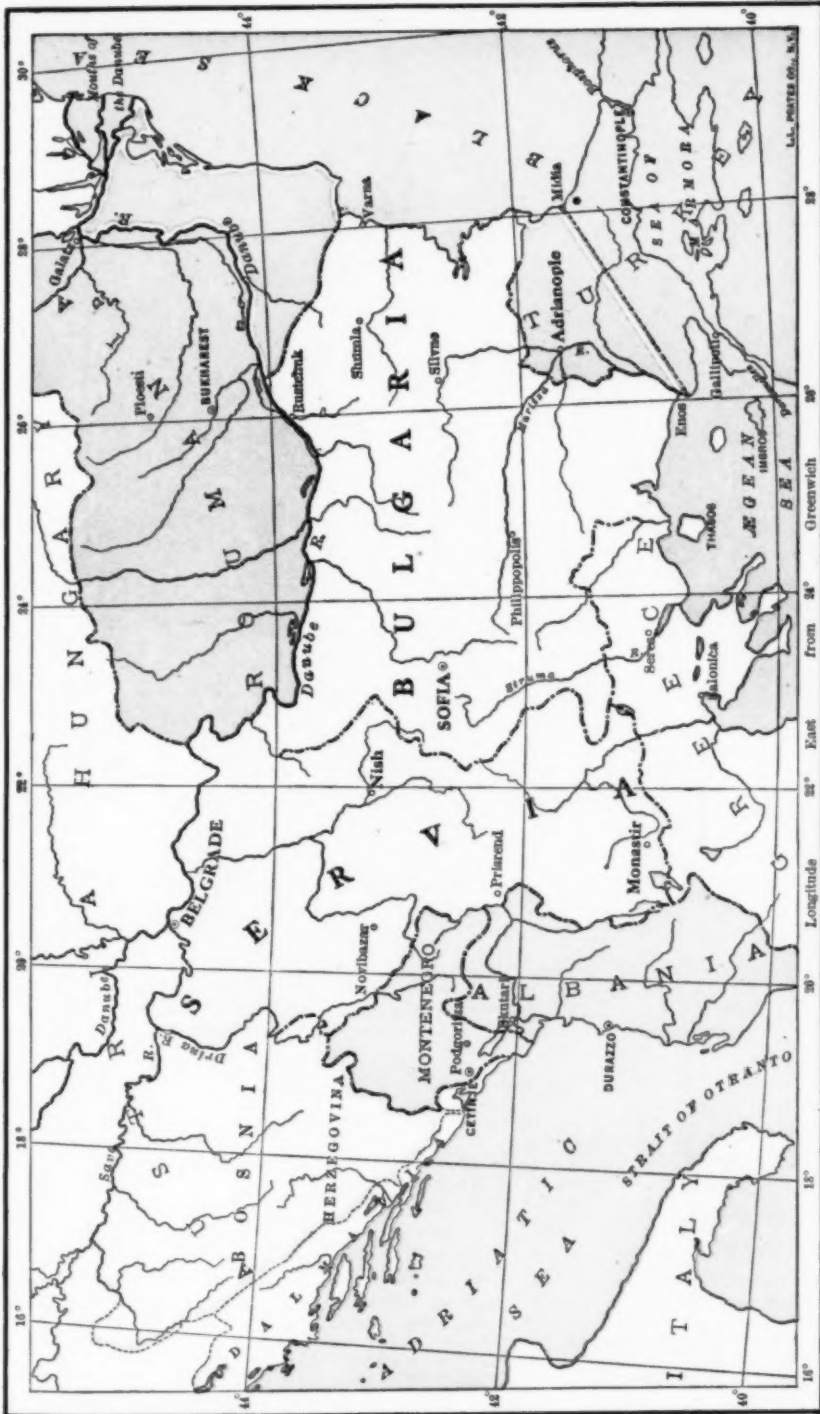
This arrangement was effected by Bis-

marck as a preliminary move in the policy of commercial and industrial expansion in the near East, which has been carried out with striking results by Kaiser William in the establishment of such enterprises as the Bagdad Railway and the acquisition of valuable mining and colonization concessions in Asia Minor.

Ever since the treaty of Berlin became the dominant factor in international policies in the Balkan peninsula, Germany and Austria have been strengthening their joint position in the near East, and the Balkan states have been brought largely under the commercial domination of



ROUMANIA'S REASONS FOR KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON THE MARCH OF EVENTS: THE HEAVY RED LINE SHOWS THE PARTS OF RUSSIA AND OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY TO THE POSSESSION OF WHICH RUMANIANS ASPIRE, ON GROUNDS OF PREVIOUS POSSESSION OR RACIAL PREDOMINANCE. THE Bessarabian Territory was taken from Rumania by her ally, Russia, at the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877



WHY BULGARIA'S ATTITUDE HAS BEEN SO LONG IN DOUBT: THE HEAVY BROWN LINE SHOWS THE FRONTIERS OF THE BULGARIAN KINGDOM AS THEY WERE AT THE END OF THE FIRST BALKAN WAR, WITH THE ADDITION OF THE DOBRUDJA AND OTHER TERRITORY BELONGING RACIALLY TO BULGARIA. THE RED LINE SHOWS SERBIA'S CLAIMS TO TERRITORY NOW WITHIN THE AUSTRIAN FRONTIERS



THE REASON WHY ITALY BROKE FROM THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE: THE HEAVY RED LINE SHOWS THE TERRITORIES, EITHER WHOLLY OR PARTLY LATIN-SPEAKING, WHICH ARE NOW UNDER AUSTRIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND FOR THE RECOVERY OF WHICH THE ITALIAN PEOPLE WERE CLAMORING AS THE WAR PROGRESSED. THESE TERRITORIES INCLUDE TRIESTE AND FOLA, THE TWO AUSTRIAN NAVAL BASES ON THE ADRIATIC. THE ANNEXATION OF THE "LOST PROVINCES" IS THE DOMINANT ISSUE IN ITALIAN PUBLIC LIFE





DENMARK'S PATRIOTIC INTEREST IN THE WAR: THE RED LINE SHOWS THE BOUNDARIES OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, WHICH WERE TAKEN AWAY FROM DENMARK BY JOINT PRUSSO-AUSTRIAN AGGRESSION IN 1864, AND OF WHICH PRUSSIA BECAME SOLE OWNER AFTER THE DEFEAT OF AUSTRIA IN 1866. SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IS INTERSECTED BY THE STRATEGIC KAISER WILHELM OR KIEL CANAL AND ALTONA, THE TWIN CITY OF HAMBURG, IS ON ITS TERRITORY



SWEDEN'S CLAIM AGAINST RUSSIA: FINLAND, NOW A RUSSIAN GRAND DUCHY IN NAME, BUT IN FACT A RUSSIAN PROVINCE, WAS A PART OF THE SWEDISH KINGDOM BEFORE THE RUSSIAN SPOILATION IN 1809, DURING THE PERIOD OF INTERNATIONAL ANARCHY THAT SIGNALIZED THE NAPOLEONIC ERA. THE BOUNDARIES OF SWEDEN BEFORE THE DISMEMBERMENT ARE INDICATED BY THE RED LINE JOINING THE PRESENT RUSSIAN POSSESSION TO THE PRESENT SCANDINAVIAN MONARCHY

Vienna. This condition of affairs was regarded from the beginning with grave misgivings at St. Petersburg, where various attempts, culminating in the Balkan War of 1912, were initiated or warmly seconded, to overcome the advantage gained by Austria and Germany in the long maneuver for a free road to Stamboul.

The Balkan War, in spite of the col-

lapse of the Balkan League at the end of the hostilities with Turkey, accomplished two results invaluable for Russia's purposes. It stimulated Serbia's pretensions to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which Austria had annexed in 1909, and it fanned the racial aspirations among the Austrian Slavs to new energy. In Austria-Hungary the atmosphere had become so inflammable

that it took but the flash of the revolver that laid Francis Ferdinand low at Sarajevo on June 28 to precipitate the universal explosion.

Now that the struggle is well under way the following constructive features of Russia's ultimate or immediate aims loom large upon the horizon of events:

First—The creation of a united Poland, under Russian sovereignty, by the detachment of Galicia from Austria and of Posen (the Slavic Posnan) from Germany.

Second—The permanent political exclusion of Germany and Austria from the Balkans by the organization of the Balkan states into a close federation, or league, under the auspices, if not the direct protection, of Russia.

The first of these purposes is definitely outlined in the manifesto issued to the Poles by the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch, the Russian commander-in-chief, at the beginning of the military operations on the Prussian and Austrian borders. The second is the logical development of Russia's expressed claims to a preferential position of influence in the Balkans.

#### MENACE TO GERMAN WORLD

It is the prospect of the closing of the road to Constantinople that is regarded by Germany and Austria-Hungary as the deadliest menace to their mutual interests. German statesmen and capitalists of both the empire and the dual monarchy have regarded the southeastern corner of Europe and the region of Asia Minor beyond as the logical field for German commercial expansion and financial enterprise. When the war broke out Germany had many millions of marks invested in railway, irrigation, mining, colonization, and agricultural projects in Asiatic Turkey.

While Germany was developing her interests in Asia Minor, Austria was establishing something approaching control of the markets in the Balkan states, all the way from the northern border of Roumania to the shores of the Sea of Marmora. With the end of the Balkan War both Austria and Germany found themselves confronted by new and unexpected conditions.

Servia seized the road that leads from Vienna to Salonika, and Greece took Salonika itself. By the simple process of fixing the railway rates on the Austrian-built Orient Railway to suit its own pur-

poses, Servia at one blow annihilated Austrian commerce in all the territory south and east of the Drina, which means practically the entire Balkan peninsula. The fighting on the Drina River represents the attempt of Austria, backed by Germany, to recover the region lost to her commerce and to establish free access to the Ægean and the Bosphorus. As to the exact form in which this freedom of access shall be secured the statesmen at Vienna have little choice, and would welcome the opportunity to occupy all the territory from the Austro-Servian frontier to the Ægean Sea. Such an occupation would accomplish in the simplest and most concrete fashion the aims of Austrian statecraft.

The clash between Russian and Germanic aspirations in the Balkan Peninsula is duplicated by the contending claims of the Balkan states themselves—and these rivalries, as exemplified by Servia's pretensions to Bosnia-Herzegovina, are the direct cause of the initial conflict in the War of the Nations. The attitude of the other peoples on the peninsula toward the war are governed by their irreconcilable claims or resentments.

Servia bases her demands for the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina upon two considerations. The ethnical consideration is that the majority of the population of the two Austrian provinces is of Serb origin. The historic ground is that under Stefan Dushan (Stephen the Strangler), the hero of the Serb race, Bosnia and Herzegovina were parts of the Servian empire from 1334 to 1355. This presentation of the case disregards the fact that for centuries outside of the score of years comprising the Servian domination neither Bosnia nor Herzegovina was included within the frontiers of Servia.

#### CONFLICTING RACE CLAIMS

The claims of the Servians, for instance, conflict hopelessly with those of the Bulgarians, who point out that under the great Czar Simeon from 890 to 927, not only Bosnia, but Servia itself was a part of the Bulgarian empire, which extended from the Black Sea to the Adriatic and from the heart of Roumania to the suburbs of Salonika, and included Adrianople.

In the present conflict the attitude of Bulgaria is contingent upon the chance of recovering the territory which was wrested

from her in the second Balkan War by Serbia, Greece, Roumania, and Turkey. The international significance of this issue was indicated in the first two months of the war, when Turkey, eager to attack Greece and Serbia by way of a diversion in favor of Germany and Austria, was restrained by the refusal of Bulgaria to consent to the Ottoman request for a right of way over Bulgarian territory to the Greek frontier, and Turkey was threatened with an attack by both Bulgaria and Roumania.

#### BULGARIA HOLDS BACK

It took the statesmen at Sofia a long time to make up their minds, however, and for two months after the outbreak of the world-conflagration it was impossible to say whether, in the event of an extension of the area of hostilities into the Balkans, Bulgaria would be found on the side of the Triple Entente as against Austria, or on the side of Turkey as against Greece, Serbia, and Roumania in an attempt to obtain restitution for the spoliation of 1913.

Roumania is divided in its sympathies because of its concurrent territorial claims against both Russia and Austria, and the attitude of the government at Bukharest long remained an uncertain quantity in the calculations of statesmen because of the unwillingness of the Roumanians to cast in their lot with either side until the maximum chances of advantage had been determined or the best bargain made.

Roumanians have not forgotten that at the close of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, during which they were in alliance with Russia, the Russians rewarded them for their valor at Plevna by annexing the Roumanian part of Bessarabia, a productive region, and gave to Roumania in return the Bulgarian swamp-lands known as the Dobrudja, south of the mouths of the Danube. The statesmen of Bukharest are awaiting the day when Bessarabia shall be theirs again, and they are eager to join in any military enterprise which may offer a reasonably good chance for the recovery of the lost province.

The Roumanian-speaking portion of Transylvania and the Bukowina is the apple of discord and a likely cause of war between Roumania and Austria-Hungary. It is contended in Bukharest that Hungary in Transylvania and Austria in the Buko-

wina are seeking to denationalize five million Roumanians by oppressive educational and administrative measures. The recovery of the Roumanian population now under Austro-Hungarian rule is the essential aim of Roumania's policy.

Turkey's grievances are both territorial and diplomatic. Setting aside as profitless a discussion of Turkey's claim to four of her lost European provinces — Roumania, Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria — there remains the significant fact that a few weeks after the beginning of the European war Turkey, availing herself of the universal preoccupation, advanced the candidacy of Mohammed Burhan-Eddin, favorite son of Abdul Hamid, deposed Sultan of Turkey, to the throne of Albania in place of Prince William of Wied, the appointee of the powers.

The aggressive attitude of the Ottoman government, and Turkey's evident determination to take full advantage of the international confusion to win back some of her lost prestige, were significantly indicated on September 10, when Constantinople informed the world-capitals that all the treaties securing special rights to foreigners living in Turkey had been abrogated as infringements upon the sovereignty of the Ottoman empire. These treaties, known as the "capitulations," confer upon the citizens of foreign powers resident in Turkey, among other advantages the right to trial before their respective consular or legation authorities, which also are authorized to apply penalties without the intervention of the Turkish government.

#### AIMED AT THE ALLIES

Inasmuch as this extra-territorial status has been in effect for centuries, the action of the Turkish government in abrogating the treaties without even troubling to consult the capitals directly interested as to the propriety of the performance, created a lively sensation among the European chancellors, and especially those of Great Britain, Russia, and France, at which countries the Ottoman declaration was especially aimed.

At the very opening of the international struggle Germany and Austria-Hungary found themselves confronted by one of the territorial problems which, unsolved, remain a menacing factor in European



affairs. That problem was presented in concrete form by the refusal of Italy, the third member of the Triple Alliance, to join her two partners in the operations against the Triple Entente.

Apart from any reading of the terms of the treaty upon which the Triple Alliance was based, and which the Italian foreign office explains were purely defensive in their scope, the government at Rome had a far more vital reason for its neutral attitude at the beginning of the conflict.

That reason was the violent anti-Austrian feeling in Italy, the result of the inclusion of a predominantly Italian population on the border-lands of Italy within the frontiers of Austria-Hungary. "Italia Irredenta"—Unredeemed Italy—is the great issue in Italian public life. Had Austria, after her defeat by the Prusso-Italian Alliance in 1866, surrendered all the Italian lands, as she did the province of Venetia, there would have been no Italian rancor to confound the calculations of Vienna in the present crisis.

#### CASE OF MISPLACED FRONTIERS

As it is, the achievement of the national ideal of the Italians is conditioned upon the detachment of the Italian-speaking portions of the dual monarchy—the Trentino, with the Adriatic region which includes the cities of Trieste and Fiume and the coast-line of Dalmatia.

The effectiveness of misplaced boundaries as breeders of resentment in the relations between Austria and Italy is only less notable than the quarrel over the possession of Alsace-Lorraine, which brought all France to the colors as one man in the first days of the war. After the crushing victory of the Prussian war machine over France in 1870 Bismarck himself strongly opposed the retention of the provinces conquered from the French. The iron chancellor is thus quoted on that issue in a conversation after his retirement from the chancellorship:

"I regarded the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine with misgiving. Moltke insisted upon it as a necessity."

Conservative counsels were disregarded in the moment of triumph by the man who thought in terms of army corps. Alsace and Lorraine were definitely included within the frontiers of the German empire. To-day, it is the passionate desire for the

recovery of those fateful fragments, and their restoration to the body of France, that has turned the war against Germany into a crusade for every French soldier on the firing-line.

Another of the sore spots upon the political frame of the Old World is to be found at the point of contact between Germany and Denmark. Its name is Schleswig-Holstein. It was in 1864 that, following a long period of internal discord in Schleswig and Holstein, a part of the kingdom of Denmark, Prussia and Austria marched into the two duchies, overcame the resistance of the Danish people, and appropriated the conquered territory, which they divided between themselves. Two years later this arrangement was modified under the stress of the Prussian cannon in the Austro-Prussian War, and Prussia took over the combined duchies.

#### VALUE OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

The annexation of Schleswig-Holstein was the preliminary move made by Bismarck in the German policy to establish absolute control of the Baltic Sea and to make Germany a powerful factor in the North Sea. The territory wrested from Denmark proved of great strategic value, theoretically at least, to the military organization of the German empire and its commercial expansion. One of Germany's great ports—Kiel—is in Schleswig-Holstein. The Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, the waterway that connects the Baltic Sea with the North Sea, runs through the heart of the former Danish duchies. By means of the rapid transit from the front yard of Russia to the back yard of Great Britain Germany almost doubled the efficiency of her sea power. She was enabled, so to speak, to cross the land with her fighting ships. All these advantages are the fruit of the dismemberment of Denmark—an act which rankles deeply in the national consciousness of the Danes.

To retain these advantages, and to consolidate its control of the Baltic and the eastern coast of the North Sea, is one of the projects toward which Germany is logically tending in the present crisis. Belgium quickly fell under the spiked helmet at the opening of the war. The Netherlands, at the mouths of the Scheldt and the Rhine, has been one of the objectives of Germanic endeavor for generations. The



possession of Denmark has long been discussed by German publicists as essential to the complete domination of the entrance to the Baltic.

The attitude of Schleswig-Holstein itself toward Germany in her present struggle is perhaps best indicated by the fact that Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein, a lieutenant-general in the Prussian army, has resigned his commission and has joined the British forces in their operations against his former chief and suzerain.

Another element of uncertainty in the European situation, because of an unsolved territorial problem, is Sweden. The people of Sweden last winter went through a constitutional crisis which was the indirect outcome of an ancient quarrel with Russia.

#### RUSSIA TOOK FINLAND

Under the provisions of the treaty of Fredrikshamn Russia, in 1809, after an invasion of Sweden, took the Swedish grand duchy of Finland. Although the people of Finland are not of Swedish stock, there is a close relationship between the two nations, and both have chafed at the status imposed upon them by Russian arms. In the case of the Finns this resentment had been sharpened by the workings of the Russian administration, which has gradually suppressed the rights of autonomy guaranteed to the grand duchy by the oath of the Czar at the time of the annexation to Russia and renewed by every succeed-

ing emperor, including the reigning sovereign.

The vigor of the nationalist movement in Finland in opposition to the relentless program of Russification, first applied by Count Bobrikoff as governor-general, has been met by the Russian government with a formidable display of military force within the boundaries of the grand duchy. The concentration of troops in Finland has been accompanied by conspicuous activities in the construction of military railways and field fortifications close to the Swedish frontier.

These warlike activities were made last winter the text of an energetic appeal by King Gustave to the people of the kingdom, urging an extensive program of defense to meet the menace of a foreign power. The ministry took prompt exceptions to the intervention of the king in political affairs, and the controversy between the cabinet and the crown was referred to the electorate in a heated parliamentary contest, which resulted in a victory for the king.

A strong party in Sweden is urging active intervention against Russia in the present war in an attempt to solve the Russo-Swedish problem, but anti-German sentiment so far has prevented such action. What would happen to-morrow in the event of a change in the international situation is one of the questions with which arbitrary frontiers, imposed by force, are confronting civilization all over Europe.

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#### FOREIGN-BORN

Am I myself or the melting-pot  
Of a million loves and hates?  
One soul's design, though flesh-begot,  
Or brew of conflicting fates?  
I ask, I ask, for across the sea,  
Out of the thunder across the sea,  
The warring tongues of battling states  
Cry: "Is your heart with me or me?"

It is easy enough for my lips to frame  
Cold reason's argued choice,  
But they cannot quell the bursting flame  
Of my inborn feelings' voice.  
I cry, I cry, out across the sea,  
Into the darkness across the sea:  
"No matter who wins, I cannot rejoice.  
All of you trample the heart of me!"

*Richard Butler Glaenser*

# THE SIXTH REASON

BY RICHARD BARKER SHELTON



RS. JORGENSEN spoke perhaps a dozen intelligible words of English. Her limited vocabulary may, perhaps, be forgiven her, despite the fact that she had been in America nearly twenty years, for Mrs. Jorgensen had been far too busy washing and scrubbing and rearing children and paying Jorgen Jorgensen's funeral expenses in tiny instalments and keeping boarders that she might have a roof over her head and her brood of six intact to learn more than the scanty dozen words of English she knew.

But whatever Mrs. Jorgensen's vocabulary may have lacked in variety she made up with the emphasis she put upon those English words whenever she used them. When, therefore, that sunny Sunday morning in June Mrs. Jorgensen beheld Essie Murdock opening the front gate and turning mincingly—by reason of the scantiness of the lower edge of her skirt—into the walk of the little cottage on Pine Street, where the Jorgensens and their five boarders managed somehow to find living quarters, she lapsed into emphatic English as she turned to her oldest daughter.

"No good!" commented Mrs. Jorgensen, using one-sixth of her vocabulary as she bobbed her head in the direction of the approaching Essie.

Hilda, the eldest of the brood which had been kept together at such cost to Mrs. Jorgensen, wrinkled her pretty brows.

"Aw, say, ma," said she in the English she knew her mother understood so imperfectly, "what yer always got it in for Essie so for? Essie ain't the worst girl that ever was. You don't like her just because she wears up-to-date clothes and hats and keeps herself up and maybe rouges her lips a little now and then and rubs her nose with powder 'cause it gets so shiny. But Essie's all right. I like her. She's lively and full of fun—"

"Are you going out somewhere with her to-day?" asked Mrs. Jorgensen in the guttural mother tongue.

"Yes," replied Hilda, speaking now in the same language. "Why not? Essie's the best friend I have. I like her."

Mrs. Jorgensen shook her head. One corner of her mouth was drawn down and she frowned stolidly.

"No good!" she repeated in her limited but emphatic English.

"I am going with her just the same," Hilda maintained in the language her mother comprehended. "I think I earn the right to a little fun now and then."

"Go, then," snapped her mother. "But be wary! I do not like her looks nor her too red lips and too black eyes these Sundays. Her laugh is too loud; she is too bold with her tongue and those black eyes of hers."

She turned impatiently to the kitchen sink, piled high with the unwashed breakfast dishes. She began rolling up her sleeves.

"Alphild!" she called sharply. "Alphild, where art thou? Do thou come and help me with the dishes, lazy one!"

A thin, tow-headed child of twelve came reluctantly from the front room, where she had been engrossed with the colored supplement of a Sunday paper one of the boarders bought each week. She caught a towel from the line behind the stove and went to the sink, where Mrs. Jorgensen was already filling a big pan with steaming water.

Essie Murdock pushed open the kitchen door. She was walking more mincingly than ever because the Jorgensens' five men boarders were ogling her openly from various points of vantage.

"Howdy do, Mis' Jorgensen! 'Lo, Alphild! For goodness' sake, ain't yer got ready yet, Hilda?" Essie greeted them severally.

"I helped to get breakfast," Hilda explained.

"Well, hurry up and do yer dollin' up," said Essie. "It's goin' to be a hot one today and there'll be an awful push goin' out to the park. We'd oughter get started before the trolleys gets too crowded."

"All right! I'll be ready in a few minutes," said Hilda.

She ran lightly up-stairs to her tiny room under the eaves—or rather to the tiny room she shared with Alphild and the twins, Mathilde and Olga, aged six. She slipped off her old calico gown and loosened and shook out the masses of pale-gold hair piled high on her head.

She was a wonderfully pretty girl as she stood there before the little spotted mirror on the wall. The skin of her neck and bare arms was of that soft whiteness of the peoples of northern races. From the blistered mirror her own eager, smiling face was reflected to her—eyes of the bluest blue, a straight little nose, a firm little mouth, a rounded chin with just the hint of a cleft in it, and that same smooth, dead-white skin, only touched at the cheeks with exquisite color.

Hilda had worked for three years now in the spinning-room of one of the big cotton mills on the river-bank. She earned six dollars a week, and this she turned over untouched each Saturday night to Mrs. Jorgensen, getting back a scant allowance to cover the cost of her clothes and an occasional trip like this to one of the trolley parks, of which there were several on the banks of the river just beyond the city limits.

Hilda had no near-gorgeous clothes like Essie Murdock's. Essie, too, worked in the spinning-room; but Essie was an only child. Moreover, her father and mother both worked in the mills. In the status of things in that mill town the Murdocks were decidedly prosperous; so whatever money Essie could earn was hers to spend as she saw fit.

But for all their lack of the smartness Essie's clothes always flaunted, the blue-serge skirt Hilda donned had an air all its own; so had the plain, white shirt-waist and the very simple little hat.

She ran down-stairs presently, flushed, eager, her eyes shining at the thought of a day away from the booming, clacking mills. She had done that pale-gold hair

of hers in the way Essie had taught her—two flat coils low on her neck, other flat coils half hiding each little pink ear.

Mrs. Jorgensen turned from the sink to glance at her daughter with a slight curling of her heavy lips. She never approved of anything Essie had suggested, and that the coiffure was of Essie's instigating was glaringly apparent.

"Huh!" sniffed Mrs. Jorgensen, rattling the dishes loudly in the pan.

"You'd oughter have a new waist, deary," said Essie, looking Hilda over critically; "one of them new loose ones with a wide collar and cut 'V' in front. You've got the neck to wear 'em."

"Huh!" sniffed Mrs. Jorgensen again, although she but vaguely understood.

"I'm savin' up for one," Hilda declared.

"I want one awful bad; but they cost so much."

"Well, let's be movin'," Essie suggested. "So-long, folks! We'll be back when we get here."

The two girls went out into the June sunshine. Hilda's pretty hair fairly shimmered in the glow of it.

"Where we goin' to-day, Essie?" she asked her companion.

"Let's take in the new one at the end of the Knob Point line—the one with the Injun name—Passawassett, or somethin' like that. They say it's got all the rest of 'em takin' its dust. We can get a car on Market Street."

They had reached the gate when Knute Jorgensen came cavorting around the corner of the house, a length of clothes-line strung about his shoulders and trailing behind him. Holding the ends of the improvised reins, flourishing a long switch, and encouraging his obliging steed with shrill shouts, little three-year-old Jorgen toddled sturdily after him.

But as Jorgen espied Hilda at the gate the joys of guiding his capering steed went promptly into abeyance. He dropped the reins and sped toward her as fast as his stubby legs could carry him.

"Wan'er go, too!" he plained. "Hil'a, Hil'a! Wan'er go!"

He clutched at her skirt, clamoring his shrill insistence to be included in the little party. Hilda bent down to him.

"Couldn't we take him along, Essie?" she asked almost wistfully.

"Him? Gracious, no!" Essie vetoed.

"It ain't no place out there for little kids like him. Besides, we're goin' for fun. We don't want to be hampered by no kids!"

Hilda gently disengaged those clutching, chubby fingers, explaining soothingly all the while:

"No, deary, Hilda can't take you this time. She's going too far for a little boy like you. But she'll bring you back some candy—some of the candy with the horses and the dogs and the eagles in it."

Jorgen's brows began to wrinkle in premonitory fashion. One small fist started to rub an eye.

"Aw, come on!" counseled Knute out of the superior wisdom of his eight years. "Course yer can't go. Watch out! Ketch me, or I'll be runnin' away from yer. Lookit! I'm pawin' and kickin' now!"

"A' right!" Jorgen agreed good-naturedly, as he caught up the trailing lines. "Ho! 'Ho! Stan' still!"

Knute favored his sister with a meaning wink as he proceeded to cavort and plunge yet more agilely.

"I'll bet them cars 'll be plumb packed full," Essie complained irritably. "It takes you so long to get started anywheres, Hilda!"

Hilda did not seem to hear. She was waving a hand to Knute and Jorgen as they disappeared around the cottage.

## II

QUITE as Essie had predicted, the trolley to the park was overcrowded. They reached the end of the car-line hot and rather tired from standing on a packed rear platform throughout the long ride; also they were not a little mussed as to their clothes. But Essie had two dollars to squander, so they soon forgot the discomforts of the journey in skimming down the high chutes, and descending—not without qualms and tremors—into the inky depths of a *papier-mâché* coal-mine and riding a musical railway with the most entrancing, screech-begetting dips in it, to say nothing of trying to stick on a circular section of rapidly revolving floor, which eventually cast them forth headlong, clasped in each other's arms and squealing delightedly, against the pneumatic padding of a near-by wall.

The lunch they had brought with them they spread on paper napkins in a deep-shaded grove of firs which lined either

bank of a little artificial brook, purring and gurgling over stones covered with imitation moss. In the distance the park band was playing popular one-steps and trots, tangoes and hesitations. All about were other little groups busy with their home-prepared lunches.

They were very happy; at least Hilda was. Essie, if the whole truth be told, was a trifle disappointed. The new park was a pretty enough place; its band was larger, its diversions more varied and more hair-raising than those at any of the other similar places along the river-bank. But Essie noticed, with more or less disgust, that all the good-looking young men they saw seemed to be squiring their chosen dames. The unattached male, and all the possibilities his species offered, seemed painfully conspicuous by his absence.

Perhaps it was this that prompted Essie's languid "Oh, I dunno; it ain't so much," when Hilda enthused over the place. Perhaps it was this great lack in an otherwise wholly edifying spot which spurred her to seek new divertisement for them with a still unspent dollar as soon as their lunch was finished. Anyway, Essie seemed very much bored by the bears in their dens, and in nowise enthusiastic over the well-stocked flying-cage of an aviary. Also, she tired of listening to the band, and wearily vetoed Hilda's suggestion that they climb a wooden observatory platform which crowned the highest knoll in the park.

The afternoon was waning, and they had strolled down to the river to feed the swans there, when Essie's languid eyes lighted upon the boat-house and the floating landing-stage just beyond it. A large sign: "Boats To Rent. Twenty-Five Cents per Hour," suggested possibilities to her.

"Tell yer what, Hilda," she said with her first show of enthusiasm since lunch; "we'll hire a boat and row down the river a piece. I can row."

Hilda hesitated. Her own eyes brightened at the sight of the silver ribbon of the stream and the highly varnished row-boats, each with its patent rowlocks of shining nickel.

"You better not spend any more money, Essie," she demurred. "Leastways, not on me."

"Yah, I'd have a swell time paddlin'



round alone, now wouldn't I?" Essie mocked. "Come on! I *wanter* spend the money on us both. 'Twouldn't be no fun spendin' it alone."

So Hilda suffered herself to be led to the landing-stage. Here Essie, with the air of a connoisseur in water-craft, selected the boat they would adorn. A grinning attendant pushed them off and stood grinning yet more as he watched Essie's high-lifted and deep-dipped strokes. He watched them until, as they were nearing a bend, Essie, remembering what some one had once tried to teach her about rowing, attempted to "feather." The unfortunate part of it was that Essie "feathered" before one of the oars was out of the water. The resultant careening of the boat was so alarming that Hilda grabbed the gunwales and squealed shrilly.

After that one alarming attempt to display form Essie confined her efforts to the plainest of plain rowing. They poked about aimlessly. Every tempting spot they saw they explored with all the zest of new discovery. It was an engaging business. After she had recovered from her momentary fright Hilda enjoyed it all hugely.

The shadows began to grow slantingly longer. The air cooled refreshingly. A purple, opalescent haze crept up from the water along the farther bank.

They rounded another bend. For some time they had been passing trim estates, their green lawns stretching down smooth as velvet to the water. Around this bend they came upon a series of sloping terraces, close-cropped, cool, smelling deliciously of grass freshly trimmed. A little green-roofed boat-house nestled close to the river. Beyond the terraces the red-tiled roof of a low, rambling bungalow showed through the trees. In the soft light of the late afternoon the place looked wonderfully cool and inviting. Essie rested from her labors and leaned pensively on the oars.

"I ain't goin' no further," she said. "If that ain't heaven over there, I ain't never goin' to say my now-I-lay-mes again."

Hilda turned to gaze at those restful green terraces with their rows of trees and their seats and stone urns and sun-dials. Then her eyes wandered to the boat-house. A rambler rose-bush in full bloom completely covered the shoreward end. In the

open door of the boat-house two men in white flannels lounged in wicker chairs, idly smoking. Just below them was a landing-stage with slim power-boats and white launches clustering about it.

The shrill plaint of a whistle and a sharp little cry from Essie brought Hilda's eyes from the cool, green beauty of that terraced bank.

"Gee, we'll get it now!" Essie was saying, and, as she spoke, she was tugging frantically at the oars, trying to pull their boat in nearer the bank.

Again that whistle screamed. Hilda looked down-stream. Tearing up the river came a sleek, black power-boat, a curl of white-crested spume flung high on either side of its beaklike prow. It seemed fairly lifting itself from the water. Behind it she could see a frothing series of rolling swells flung out fanwise to wash at either bank.

"We'll get tossed about some, believe me, if we get caught in her wash," Essie panted as she pulled the harder. "I've seen 'em before. I know them pests, darn 'em!"

Although she did not realize it, she had headed the boat straight for that landing-stage by the boat-house. The power-boat came on in ruthless fashion, its whistle still screeching. Hilda could see a begoggled figure bending low over the steering-wheel.

"Whyn't he shut off his power some till he gets past and not go tryin' to upset us, the old fool!" Essie whined.

The power-boat was abreast of them by this time. It was passing them like a black streak. Hilda saw the first of those high rollers in its wake bearing down on them. She leaned forward, clutching hard at the gunwales with both hands.

"Look out! Look out, there!" cried a warning voice close at hand. "Head into it! Careful now! Look where you're going!"

Their eyes busy with the offending power-boat, neither girl had noticed that they were hard upon the landing-stage. At the sound of the voice Hilda looked up. The boat-house was right above them. Essie, too, glanced anxiously over her shoulder. Too late she saw that only inches separated the side of their boat from the landing-stage. She dug down hard with her left oar, intending to sheer off. There was a snap, a crack, a prodigious



splintering; the oar jammed against the edge of the landing-stage and broke short off.

Simultaneously the wash sent them heavily against the platform, careening them dangerously. Essie screamed. Hilda saw one of the men leap from his chair and come running toward them. The other man was close behind him.

"Steady!" cautioned the first arrival. "Sit still! No danger! None at all! Just sit perfectly still for a minute. Don't try to get up!"

He had grasped the gunwale of the rolling boat and was doing his best to steady it. The other man ran up. He, too, lent aid.

There were a few wild tosses; much grating of the boat's strakes against the landing-stage. Then the wash swept past.

"Well," said the man who had first come to their aid, "you came almighty near getting ducked that time, didn't you? You should have headed into it. You'd have been all right then."

Hilda noticed that he was neither a young man, nor yet an old one. His face was round, smooth-shaven, and lazily good-natured. He was a trifle bald.

The other man was somewhat younger, in the early thirties, perhaps. His hair was thick and dark. He was regarding the two girls with a look of quiet amusement.

"Better come ashore and get rested a bit after your little experience," this second man invited.

He held out a hand to Hilda. Tremblingly she took it and stepped out on the float. The other man helped Essie from the boat.

Essie seemed suddenly to realize their predicament. She glanced with rueful eyes at the splintered oar and the scarred side of the boat.

"Gosh!" she burst out anxiously. "That's a rented boat. I sha'n't never darst take it back. I ain't got enough to pay for what they'll go and soak me for the damage I've done."

Both men laughed.

"Oh, don't let that worry you," said the younger man easily. "Come up to the boat-house and sit down and get over the scare you've had."

He led the way thither and drew forward seats for them—low, wide wicker chairs, luxuriously upholstered.

"From whither whence, naiads?" asked the round-faced man with twinkling eyes.

Essie stared.

"We came down from Passawassett Park," said Hilda, her voice still trembling a little.

The younger man glanced quickly at her. She made a most engaging picture in the big wicker chair.

"Gee! that bunged-up boat has sure got me going," Essie continued to worry. "Whatta yer suppose they'll try to set me back for it?"

The round-faced man grinned at his companion.

"What do you say, Billy? Shall we be blind to treasures flung at us this way? Hadn't we better keep the mermaids to dinner?" he inquired.

"Certainly, if we can induce them," said the other man. He turned to the girls. "You'll both dine with us, won't you?" he said, making it half invitation, half command.

"How many in the family?" Essie inquired pertly.

"Just us two," said the younger man with a wave of his hand toward his highly diverted companion.

"Sure we'll stay; won't we, Hilda?" Essie made haste to accept.

"I don't know—" Hilda began doubtfully.

"Oh, I really think you'd better," said the man beside her with a nice smile. "We'll have it served out here on the terrace, under that big tree over there, with little paper lanterns all over the tree and the moonlight—there'll be a moon to-night."

"Oh!" said Hilda softly, her big eyes shining.

"She'll stay," said Essie with conviction, "or I won't ever speak to her again."

"That's the stuff!" the round-faced man encouraged. "Coercion when all else fails!"

"And if you'll stay," put in the other, speaking apparently to Essie, but looking eagerly at Hilda, "I'll have one of the men take a launch and tow your boat back. The man who has the boat privileges at Passawassett Park is a particular friend of mine. I think I can fix it with him so it won't cost you anything for the broken oar and the scraped varnish."

"Say, maybe that ain't some white of

you!" Essie enthused. "You gotter stay now, Hilda. I ain't got the price to stand for them damages."

"I take it it's settled, then," said the man beside Hilda. "Ben, you trot along and find Jim and tell him to take that boat back to the park. I'll run up to the house and have a word with Mitsu about dinner. Pardon us for a few moments"—he paused and frowned a little—"naiads!" he ended with a grin at the other man.

The moment they were alone in the boat-house Essie reached over to clutch Hilda's arm.

"Whatta yer know about *that!*" she demanded excitedly. "Maybe we ain't went and grabbed off a coupla heavy swells! I don't know who the one with me is—the one called Ben; but the one that was beside you, Hilda—the youngest one, with the I-never-done-it-search-me face—is Billy Stillings that owns the biggest part of the mills we work for. He's owned 'em ever since his old man died two years ago. I guess he's some little romper, from what I hear of him, for all that long face of his. And dinner with 'em here to-night! I should worry!"

Hilda's eyes were dreamy as she looked out at the green terraces and then across the river to the far shore where the purple mist was deepening.

"I didn't know there were any such places as this one," she sighed.

### III

HILDA will never forget that dinner on the terrace, with the paper lanterns glowing softly in the tree overhead, the moonlight shimmering on the water, the silver glinting, and the cut glass now and then showing dull fire on the snowy napery; and Mitsu, a slim, mask-faced Japanese youth, flitting noiselessly in and out of the shadows as he served them.

It was a wonderful dinner. The two men made them feel like old and honored friends. There was laughter and merry banter and always the soft glow of the many candles filtering down upon them.

When coffee was on the cloth and the two men had lighted cigarettes, the man called Ben pushed back his chair.

"What say, sister?" he suggested to Essie. "Let's go down to the boat-house and hark what the sad sea waves say? Game?"

"Watch me!" said Essie, springing up.

Hilda, too, would have risen, but Stillings reached across the table and laid a hand on her arm.

"Let us stay here," he said in a low voice. "*We* don't care particularly about the boat-house!"

Followed the tramp of footsteps on the boat-house floor, the scraping of chairs, a giggle from Essie.

Stillings nodded to Mitsu, who softly withdrew. The candles in the lanterns flared and flickered in the wisp of breeze. Across the table Stillings smoked on silently, his eyes on Hilda's flushed, dreamy face.

He did not speak until the sounds in the boat-house had died away. Then he leaned toward her across the cloth.

"You like all this, don't you?" he said quietly, with a comprehensive wave of one hand; "the lights and the flowers and the terraces and the moonlight and the river? I think I can see in your eyes how much you like it."

Hilda caught her breath.

"It's lovely," she almost whispered, but her eyes shone brighter than the little candles. "I never dreamed there was—was anything like this. It almost hurts, it's so—so lovely," she ended, helplessly repeating herself.

He smiled at her and nodded.

"You work in the mills, I think your friend said?"

"Yes."

"For very little, I suppose?"

"Six dollars a week," said Hilda.

"And you like—*this!*"

He smoked on in silence again.

"There is no reason why you shouldn't have it all often—quite as often as you like," he said at last. "Has any one ever told you how beautiful you are?" he ended with seeming irrelevance.

"No-o!" she said slowly, shaking her pretty head.

"Well, you are," said he, and she saw a sudden light spring into those quiet eyes. "You're the loveliest little creature that was ever made. You belong in a setting like this. No wonder you like lights and flowers and moonlight and pretty things. You're a part of them; they're yours by right."

"You can have them, too. Listen!" He was leaning far across the table now;

his hand was gripping her arm. "I want you here often—among pretty things, as you should be. I want to buy other pretty things for you, heaps of them, and—"

Hilda came suddenly awake. She sprang to her feet, overturning her chair with the abruptness of her movement.

"I'm going home," she said hoarsely, her eyes wide with fright.

"No!" said he.

She picked up the overturned chair and dodged behind it.

"Don't try to stop me—please don't try to stop me!" she panted breathlessly.

Stillings, too, had jumped from his chair. He made no movement toward her. He stood there for a moment, looking at her with slightly lifted brows. Then suddenly he squared his shoulders. The light died out of his eyes.

"No one ever stayed here, little girl, who didn't want to," said he in his old quiet tones.

"I don't want to stay—not now," she said tremulously. "I'm going now."

"It's a long way to the trolley," said he. "Will you let me run you in town in my car?"

"Will you take Essie, too?"

"If she wants to go," said he with a queer smile. "Perhaps we'd better find out."

Together they went down to the boat-house. Two of the wicker chairs were drawn very close together in the patch of moonlight by the door. Essie Murdock's head was on the round-faced man's shoulder and his arm was about her.

"Sorry, old man," Stillings apologized as they entered, and Essie with a little squeal of annoyance sat erect. "I know there are times when four is a mob. But my young friend here finds my society dull. She wants to go home."

"Aren't you coming, too, Essie?" Hilda asked, sick with shame and certain unpleasant premonitions.

"Squealer!" Essie taunted shrilly. "No, I'm not—not yet a while. You're not going home, either!"

"Yes, I *am*," Hilda said with sudden fierceness.

"Then go, if you want. I *don't*!"

Hilda found herself drawn gently out of the boat-house.

"Do you still want to go home?" Stillings asked.

"Yes!" she choked. "Yes! Please, please take me home!"

He looked at her searchingly in the moonlight; then he shrugged his shoulders. Mitsu was padding noiselessly down the terrace to remove the table and chairs.

"Mitsu, have the little six sent up here right away," Stillings ordered.

"Yess'r!" said Mitsu's high-pitched, stilted voice.

Stillings talked engagingly on that homeward ride—just ordinary commonplaces. He pointed out to her the places of interest as they passed them; he made sure the pace of the car was to her liking.

Hilda, shamed, sick at heart, sat huddled on the seat beside him, answering his questions in monosyllables.

So they came to Market Street. A church clock was just booming nine.

"You live on Pine Street, I think you said," Stillings made the assertion half-questioningly.

"Yes; but please leave me on Market Street near Pine," she instructed.

Presently he swung the car to the curb.

"Before you go," said he, "there's one little thing I want to say. You think now you don't care for the lights and the flowers and the green terraces and the moonlight on the river and the other pretty things. Maybe, when you come to think it over, you'll change your mind. If you do, just come to that place by the river again. I am there practically all the time."

"I shall never come," said Hilda. "I know I shall never come."

He stepped from the car and handed her to the curb.

"May I ask why?" said he.

Some unrecognized instinct surged up within her. She nodded toward the shabby entrance of Pine Street.

"Come with me," she said.

Silently he followed her down Pine Street's uneven sidewalk. She stopped before a small white cottage with a bare, tiny front yard.

"There are just six reasons why I shall never come," said Hilda.

Through the yellow oblong of light that was the kitchen window she could see her mother and Alphild still washing the dishes of the late Sunday night supper.

"There are two of the reasons," said the girl. "And there," she went on, pointing to the front stoop where Knute and the

twins squabbled sleepily, "are three others."

She was not aware she had raised her voice, but suddenly from somewhere just within the open door came a shrill cry. Jorgen came toddling down the path on his stubby little legs.

"Hil'a, take! Hil'a, take!" he cried joyously, running to her and stretching out his arms in an invitation to be taken up. "I yait for you and I yait for the can'y!"

She caught him up with a little choking laugh. She found the little box of candy she had brought him from the park and opened it for him.

"And this is the sixth reason," she said, turning to Stillings.

He stood looking at her for a moment.

"No, I hardly think you'll ever come. Good night!" said he, and turned on his heel.

A match flared momentarily in the darkness as he lighted a cigarette. Then he was gone.

#### IV

HILDA came flying breathlessly home from work that gray October night. A terrible fear was gripping her heart. Of late little Jorgen had been stumbling about awkwardly, blinking those blue eyes of his, and seeming very much dazed and befuddled. Hilda had begun to watch him closely. When one day she saw him run full tilt into a chair in his path, although he was looking straight at it and the sunlight from the window was strong upon it, she waited no longer. On her way back to the mills that very noon she had sent a doctor to the house to look at Jorgen's eyes.

Jorgen sat in his little chair in the corner as she came in. Her mother was bustling about getting the supper for the boarders, but there were traces of tears on her fat cheeks.

"The doctor—what did he say?" quavered Hilda, hopeful, yet afraid. She spoke, of course, in the mother tongue.

"He is going blind," said Mrs. Jorgensen, "unless there can be cutting with a knife—very delicate cutting with a knife."

"Oh!" said Hilda with a sharp intake of her breath. The single word was a cry of pain.

"Then it shall be done," she said a moment later.

Mrs. Jorgensen shook her head.

"It will cost much," said she. "It is very delicate cutting. The doctor said he thought he could find a man who would do it for one hundred and fifty dollars. And that is very cheap—the cheapest we could hope for."

Hilda leaned heavily against the littered kitchen table. One hand was at her slim white throat. She was trying to control the quivering of her under lip.

"Then he must go away where it is warmer at this time of year—where it is warm enough for him to be much out of doors. That will cost more—much more."

Again that cry of pain from Hilda.

"He will be blind," said Mrs. Jorgensen hopelessly. "It is the lot of such as us."

Jorgen had risen from the little chair. There was a crash. Groping his way toward Hilda's voice, he had run into the other end of the table.

"Hil'a, take!" he whimpered with little outstretched arms.

Hilda, white-faced, went up-stairs. She was weeping bitterly, noiselessly. When she came down again she was dressed in her best; the same clothes she had worn to the park that June Sunday, save that now a thin and wholly inadequate blue-serge jacket was added.

"I am going out," was all she said.

She did not know how to get to that house on the river, except by going to the park and following the river-bank from there down.

The season being over, the trolleys no longer ran to the park gate. They stopped a good mile short of the entrance.

At the end of the route Hilda left the car and plodded on to the park. It was deserted and ghostlike and creepy in the October night. She hurried through the gate, stumbled down to the river, and followed along the bank. It was cold, but it was not wholly from cold that she shivered.

It was nearing eight o'clock when she reached that boat-house with the green roof. It was tightly boarded up now. A light glimmered in the bungalow among the trees. She found her numbed fingers manipulating a brass knocker on the heavy oak door. Mitsu answered the summons.

"Mr. Stillings—is he here?" she asked between chattering teeth.

"Yes, miss, ple's," said Mitsu, bowing



formally as he opened the door wider. "Step in, ple's'!"

He ushered her into a big room and switched on the lights. The ceiling was low and girt with heavy rafters. Heavy rugs made the footfalls noiseless. A dying fire twinkled red embers on the hearth of the wide-throated fireplace. A wicker-shaded lamp, with magazines all about it, squatted fatly in the middle of a low table.

Hilda sank on the edge of a deep leather lounging-chair.

It was warm—very warm in that room, but still her teeth continued to chatter. She was aware Mitsu was watching her. Then he spoke in that high-pitched voice of his as he stepped to the hearth.

"Excuse, ple's'!" said he, and piled the andirons high with birch logs, prodding the glowing embers with a long poker until the flames from the birchwood were leaping high up the chimney's throat.

Then, "Excuse, ple's'!" he squeaked again, and went out.

How long she sat there, pulling nervously at the fingers of her worn gloves, she did not know. She heard Mitsu's thin voice speaking somewhere at a distance; a deeper voice answering it. Then the stairs creaked as some one came fairly bounding down them. Stillings stood in the doorway, his eyes devouring her. He was grinning like a surprised and highly pleased boy.

"Well?" he fairly shouted in his exuberance.

Hilda arose tremulously from the chair edge.

"I—I'm here," she faltered.

One eager stride placed him beside her. An arm went about her waist. She was drawn to him; crushed against him.

"You should have come sooner, so we could have had dinner on the terrace again," he chided her. "Too late for that now. But we'll have a little table for two right here in front of the fire—a little table with some flowers and candles and things."

He looked at the leaping flames.

"That won't be so bad—eh? Of course, it won't be like the moonlight and the leaves rustling. Still, the crackle of birch isn't so bad. Do you like it?"

"Yes," said Hilda in a colorless voice.

With his fingers beneath her chin he tilted back her head and smiled down at her whimsically.

"Now will we take off our hat, perhaps, and tarry a while?"

Her fingers began fumbling for the hat-pins.

"Yes," she said in that same dull voice.

Then all at once she drew away from him. She faced him resolutely, as if only with great effort.

"If I stay—" she faltered.

"Well?" he encouraged as she paused.

"If I stay I've got to have money—whole lots and lots of money," she hurried on, her eyes refusing to meet his. "A hundred and fifty dollars right away—and then—more!"

"Ah!" said he, and he ran an appraising eye over her plain gown. "Some pretty clothes first, of course. A hundred and fifty grandmothers! Why, a hundred and fifty dollars won't be a drop in the bucket of the things you'll have. Just wait!"

"I've got to have the hundred and fifty dollars to-night," she persisted in a voice that shook.

"A hundred and fifty dollars right away!" he repeated, rather mystified. "You're not going to get pretty clothes to-night, are you?"

"Clothes!" she cried with sudden scornful vehemence. "Clothes! Ah, God, no! Little Jorgen—the one that came to meet me that night when you took me home from here last June—he's—he's going blind!"

Suddenly she sank into a chair, torn and shaken with bitter sobs.

Stillings stood staring at her stupidly for a moment; then he uttered a startled oath under his breath. He strode to the hearth and glared down at the leaping flames. A spark came hurtling out over the fire-screen. He ground it beneath his heel with a grunted curse.

He seemed much older when at length he turned from the fire.

"This won't do," he said in an odd, strained voice. "This won't do at all! Better take a spin with me in the car before dinner—will you?"

She did not lift her head, but she nodded miserably.

She heard him go into the hall, heard him speaking to Mitsu; then the front door opened and closed. A moment later she heard the whirring of an engine outside.

Then Mitsu came into the room with a great coat of heavy frieze.



"Excuse, ple's'," he said to her. "I help you in' it!"

She suffered the huge coat to be slipped on. Mitsu opened the front door. Stillings, in a coat of frieze like the one she wore, sat in the car at the steps. Mitsu helped her to the seat beside him.

The engine began a louder purring; the car moved down the winding drive.

"How do you know the little chap's going blind?" he asked as they neared the big stone gate-posts at the entrance of the grounds.

Briefly she told him of her fears, of the doctor she had called in that day, and of the result.

"What doctor was it?" he demanded.

"Dr. Bradbury."

"What street is he on?"

"Middle Street."

They swung into the road. Stillings took a firmer grip on the wheel. A gear creaked as it was shifted. They shot ahead and went into the night at a furious pace. It would have frightened Hilda at any other time. Now, holding tightly to the edge of the seat, she felt only a dull, apathetic sense of wonder. Street lights flew past in luminous, unbroken lines. She knew the horn was sounding incessantly and that the pace grew momentarily wilder. They rumbled across the bridge, whirled recklessly into Market Street, and pulled up at the curb with a clash and a clank and a nerve-racking jolt.

"Here we are," said Stillings between set teeth, as he stepped out of the car and stretched out a hand to her.

She got out, a trifle dazed.

"The coat, if you please. You won't need it now," said he.

Obediently she unbuttoned the coat and let him strip it from her.

They had stopped at the very place on Market Street where he had left her that other night in June.

"Why," she said with a little gasp of surprise, "you've brought me back — home!"

He did not answer. An awful fear gripped her. She caught his sleeve.

"I didn't mean to be such a little fool," she choked. "I didn't mean to cry. I won't again."

"You bet you won't," said he crisply.

She saw he was about to get into the car again. Panic seized her. She seemed

to see a little bewildered Jorgen, groping his stumbling way toward her with outstretched arms. She tightened her hold on the frieze coat-sleeve. She strove to drag him away from the car.

"Won't I do?" she begged piteously. "Oh, won't I do?"

He whirled on her. Almost roughly he freed the coat-sleeve.

"Don't say that again!" he said sharply. "And don't stand there looking at me like that! Damn it, I'm only human!"

He sprang into the car. He did not look at her.

"No, you won't do at all," he snapped, his head turned resolutely away, and swung the car about.

## V

FIVE minutes later he stood on the wide stoop of one of the old-fashioned houses on Middle Street, impatiently prodding the button of the bell.

"Is this Dr. Bradbury?" he asked of the gray-haired man who finally answered his summons.

The gray-haired man admitted his identity.

Stillings stepped inside and followed the doctor into the office at the right of the hall.

"I believe, Dr. Bradbury, you're looking after a youngster of the Jorgensen family; bad eyes — going blind, or something of the sort. Well—"

Stillings reached into his pocket. From the roll of bills he drew forth he peeled off several and laid them on the desk.

"I want you to see that he has the necessary operation—the best man you can get for it, mind you; and send the kid away wherever it's best for him to go after the thing is done. And call on me if more money is needed. I'm William Stillings, who owns one of the mills here.

"And I'll be very grateful, doctor, if you won't say a word of what I'm doing to anybody. Everybody in the mills would be running to me with hard-luck yarns if this got out. I'd be pestered to death with 'em. You understand?"

He moved toward the door. With his hand on the knob, he turned.

"Just one thing more. I wish you'd get word over to the Jorgensens right away that you've found a chance to get the kid's eyes fixed and that the financial end

of it will be looked after. Thank you! Good night!"

The car was just moving away from the curb when Stillings heard his name called. He turned. Puffing along the sidewalk and waving his stick, came a round-faced man who seemed neither very young nor yet old.

"What luck, Billy," said he, panting up. "I've just been phoning out to the house trying to get you. Angels await us at the corner of South and Market Streets at nine this evening. I think they'd enjoy meeting you. I know you'd enjoy meeting them. Take me thither."

He got into the car.

"Are they from the mills, Ben?" Stillings asked.

"Angels are from heaven, Billy," said the other, prodding an elbow with supposed facetiousness into Stillings's ribs. The car turned a corner.

But the other made no reply. He looked grimly ahead.

The round-faced man saw they were heading for the bridge.

"You orient yourself very badly, Billy," he complained. "You don't cross the bridge to get to South Street."

"We're not going to South Street," snapped the man at the wheel. "I'm taking you out to the house to tell you why."

## IN THE PATH OF BATTLE

BY KATHRYN JARBOE



UNDER the yellow August sunlight the fields lay deserted; here a scythe leaning against a half-completed stack, there a sickle rusting on the stubble. The twilight fell upon deserted hearths where women, with trembling fingers, cooked their scanty meals. The round, full moon looked down upon scattered homes where only the children slept, where the women wept and shuddered and waited.

For the men had marched away under the brilliant, flaunting colors. None had been too old to go, none too young. Their lips had shouted the raucous notes, the valiant words—*Honneur, Patrie, Gloire*—but every eye was wet, every heart heavy with despair and terror.

Bibi had watched them go, the tiny staff in his clenched fingers beating time to the brave music, to the hurrying feet, but, in the nameless terror that had descended upon the land, he clung to the old grandmother's hand and, when all were gone—father, uncle, brother—he flung himself sobbing upon the ground. The woman, left alone in the world save for the small grandchild, watched with eyes too old for tears until there was no longer even a cloud of dust upon the horizon; then she turned

and hobbled into the empty house, leaving the child still lying there upon the lonely road.

Before the hearth she sat, seeing the long procession of all the others who, under that same tricolor, had marched out, away from her life, never to return. Hours later, when Bibi came in, his little tragedy all forgotten, his face reflecting only the golden glory of the summer day, he found her sitting there, dry-eyed, her shriveled lips muttering prayers for those already dead, for those about to die. Into her shaking hands he thrust his offering—a nosegay of bluets, the color of the sky, of field-poppies, a flame of red, and mullein, white with the dust of the road—the tricolor that had taken from them grandfather, father, husband, and sons.

A choking sob slipped across her lips and she flung the flowers from her onto the hearth, where the red petals of the poppies lay in mimicry of the fire that might never again blaze thereon.

Days passed; only a few—Bibi could not count them, Mère Craquette would not. The heavy-headed blades of grain lay prone upon the ground, ungarnished by the hands that were too tiny, the hands that were too old. There were others, of course, in that deserted land, as lonely as

these two, but there were no others quite so helpless—a child of six, a grandam of eighty-six. Indoors, the woman could only sit and pray. Out of doors, the child played with his flowers—blueets, bits of the sky, poppies, red as blood, and mullein, a dried and ghastly white. The short-lived poppies drooped and fell to the earth, the mullein crumbled to dust, only the blueets were left.

And then there dawned the day of horror. For hours of light and darkness the roar of cannon had filled the universe, for hours of light and darkness the grandmother had knelt quivering and trembling before the crucifix. At daybreak the low horizon stretched—a long line of fire and smoke; flames licking up the parched fields with the hovels that stood in their midst, black smoke creeping like a pall across the sky.

In the gray light before the sun had risen Mère Craquette stood in the doorway and watched the oncoming devastation, a foeman that feet, however young and agile, might not outdistance, that no human hand might stay. Clutching Bibi by the wrist, she reentered the house and closed the door. Better to die crouched before the cross, with suppliant hands upon its succoring feet, than to be caught creeping and crawling through the fields of matted grain.

For a little time Bibi lay quiet in her arms, listening to the ever-increasing roar, watching the light that even now was redder than any rays of sunlight that had ever flooded the windows of his home. Soon, though, he grew restless and slipped away from the feeble hands that, with the passing of all things earthly, had almost forgotten to hold him. Out of doors the horizon was still only a line of red and black, and Bibi could not know that it was a score of miles nearer to his home than it had been a short hour before. Here and there above the broken grain there waved a tiny flag of blue. Upon his baby lips fragments of "*Honneur, Gloire, Patrie*," he ran to and fro gathering his beloved blueets.

Tired, stifled by the heat, the source of which he could not understand, he sat down at the edge of the road. And now there was a new sound in the air—not the deadly roar of the cannon that had thundered for two whole days, not the rush of flame, but a steady, rhythmic throb that,

with every instant, grew nearer and louder. Bibi's mind, already confused by the difficult breaths he drew, could not tell at first whether it was the feet of men or horses that he heard. He stood up, tottering a little, but still clutching in his hands his blueets.

Then he saw, rushing down upon him, horses, more horses than in all his life he had ever seen and, mounted on them, men, different from any men that he had ever beheld. Did he look for the tricolor? Did he know that only under the tricolor might friends be found? High above his yellow head he held the blueets.


Perhaps it was only fate, perhaps it was the God to whom the *grand'mère's* prayers were rising, but the man who saw the baby hands and the blue corn-flowers was the man of war. A sudden word and there was a sudden halt of all the pounding hoofs. Bending down from his horse, the man of war took the blossoms, and on his lips was a word the childish ears had never heard spoken in a tongue he could not understand: "*Kaiserblumen!*"

"*Honneur, Patrie, Gloire.*" The valiant words rested curiously upon the baby lips, but in an instant the intellect before which the entire world was trembling understood. Honor—Glory—Fatherland—the same in every heart—for which every man must lay down his life, whatever helpless atom he might leave behind him.

There were orders quick and clear and then the pounding hoofs passed on, but around the fields of Mère Craquette was a double cordon composed of the flower of the army, the emperor's personal staff. It was theirs to obey, whether it might be a phalanx of fellow creatures that was to be mowed down, whether it might be a conflagration lighted by their own torches that was to be stayed.

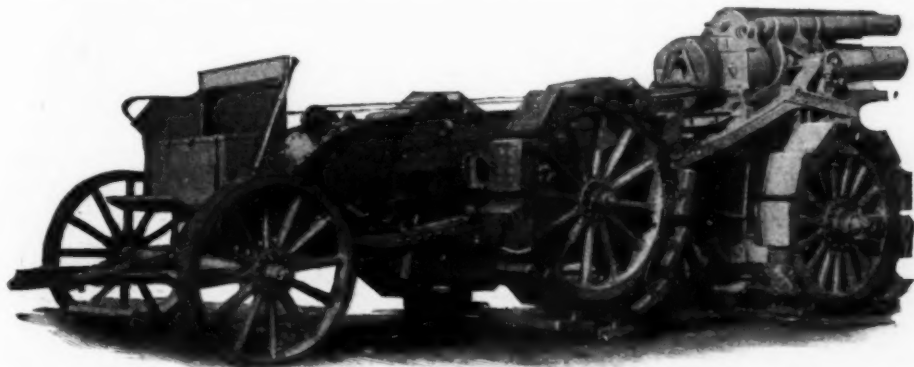
The August moon was well past the full, only a little crescent of gold that preceded by a few hours the rising of the sun. It looked down upon a scorched and smoldering territory. To the north, to the south, to the east and west it stretched, but in the center stood Bibi's home, the small thatched cottage, surrounded by its field of grain, trampled, perhaps, a little under the feet of its zealous defenders—fallen here and there—but sheltering everywhere clusters of blossoms blue as heaven itself, Bibi's blueets, the *Kaiserblumen* beloved by the man of war.

# **ENGINES** *of* **DESTRUCTION** **BORN *of* WAR** by Howard C. Felton

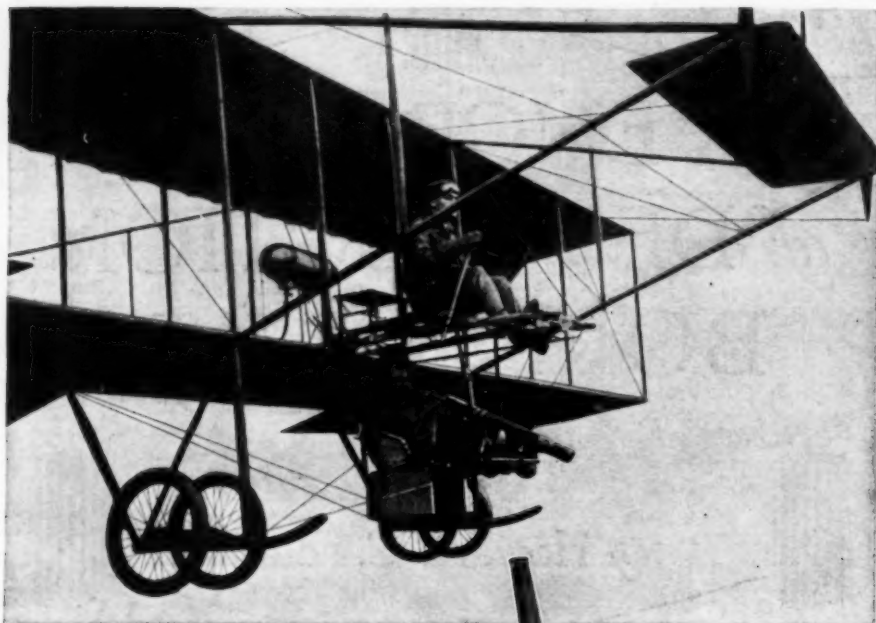

**T**HE appalling lists of casualties in the battles of the War of the Nations have brought the world to a grim realization of the success which has been achieved by the collective inventive genius of mankind in the perfecting of the engines of destruction. In no line of endeavor has greater progress been accomplished, apparently, than in the ma-

chinery of life-taking under the sanction of peoples and of parliaments.

Despite the terrible efficiency of the world's implements of warfare, however, the more novel means of dealing death are yet in their infancy, and the prospect of their development to a state of complete effectiveness is not sufficiently imminent to relegate the better known means of offense and defense to oblivion.



**HEAVY SIEGE MORTAR MOUNTED ON "CATERPILLAR" WHEELS, FOR USE OVER SWAMPY OR SANDY GROUND. IT HAS AN EIGHT-INCH MUZZLE, AND CAN SEND A SHELL HURLING SIX MILES WITH DESTRUCTIVE FORCE AT THE END OF THAT FLIGHT. THE SMALLER CYLINDERS ARE DEVICES FOR TAKING UP THE RECOIL AND PREVENTING THE CARRIAGE FROM "KICKING" AFTER DISCHARGE**



NEW AUTOMATIC AERIAL GUN, INVENTED BY COLONEL ISAAC  
PERIMENTS WERE MADE AT BISLEY, ENGLAND, JUST BEFORE  
ACCURACY OF THE GUN, AS SHOWN BY THE RESULTS OF  
GROUND WHILE THE AEROPLANE WAS IN FLIGHT, WAS

N. LEWIS, WITH WHICH INTERESTING EX-  
THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR. THE  
FIRING AT OBJECTS ON THE  
FOUND TO BE REMARKABLE  
EVEN UNDER UN-  
FAVORABLE CON-  
DITIONS

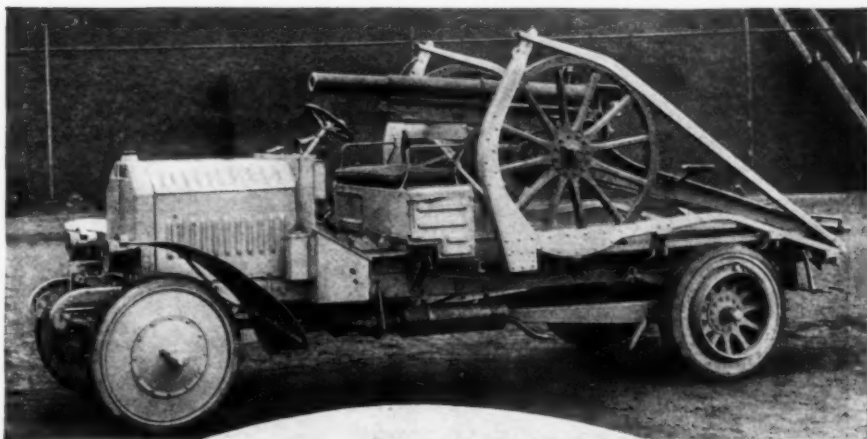
But these old-established weapons have been improved by the application of successive scientific inventions to a pitch of deadliness that hardly suggests their origin in the more archaic forms.

The main reliance of armies still remains the infantry rifle. But

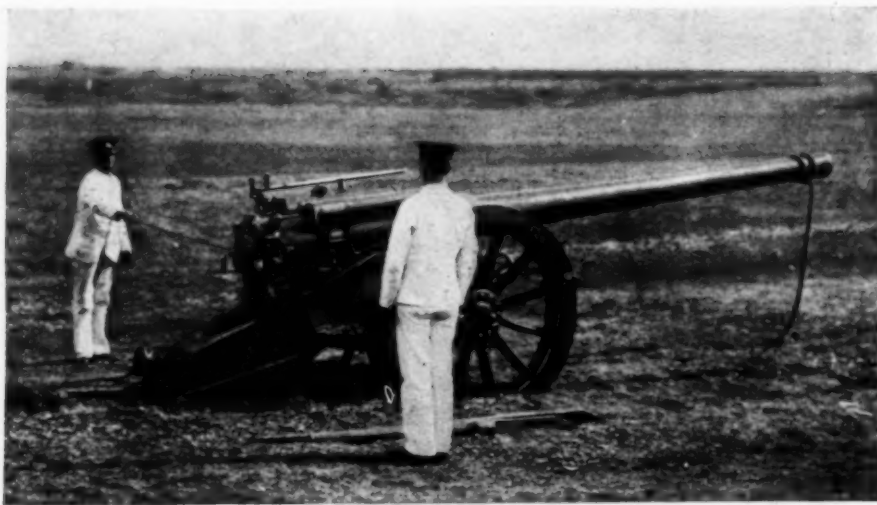


GERMAN AUTOMOBILE GUN FOR FIGHTING AIR-SHIPS, WHICH IS HIGHLY MOBILE AND CAN BE AIMED  
AT A FLYING-MACHINE AT ANY ANGLE OF FLIGHT. THE VELOCITY OF THE PROJECTILE  
IS SO HIGH THAT AT AN ALTITUDE OF A MILE IT CAN REACH THE AIR-SHIP  
IN FULL MOTION BEFORE IT HAS HAD TIME TO FLY FORTY YARDS





TOP PICTURE—FIELD-GUN ON MOTOR TRUCK, OF SWIFT AND DEADLY EFFICIENCY. CENTER—TRACTOR HAULING HEAVY FRENCH SIEGE-GUN WITH GUN CREW AND AMMUNITION. BOTTOM—IN THE BULGARIAN TRENCHES AT ADRIANOPLE IN THE WAR OF 1912. A SIEGE-GUN IN ACTION, ITS RANGE DIRECTED BY AN AEROPLANE FLYING OVER THE ENEMY'S POSITION



FIRING A 4.7-INCH SIEGE-GUN, WHICH IS TO BE FOUND ON THE ADVANCING LINE OF THE BRITISH IN THE PLUNGING ATTACKS UPON THE GERMANS. OBSERVE THE GREAT LENGTH OF THE CYLINDER, WHICH HAS GIVEN THE NICKNAME OF "LONG TOM" TO THE WEAPON

this arm has undergone within the last quarter of a century a change as great as that brought about by the introduction of breech-loading. The rapidity of fire has been immensely increased; smokeless powder has been introduced, and the bullet has been given such form that the atmosphere is traversed by it with incomparably greater velocity.

The arm itself is stronger and can endure far greater interior pressures; and the powder grains, even, are carefully designed to govern the burning so as to give the greatest power with the least strain on the

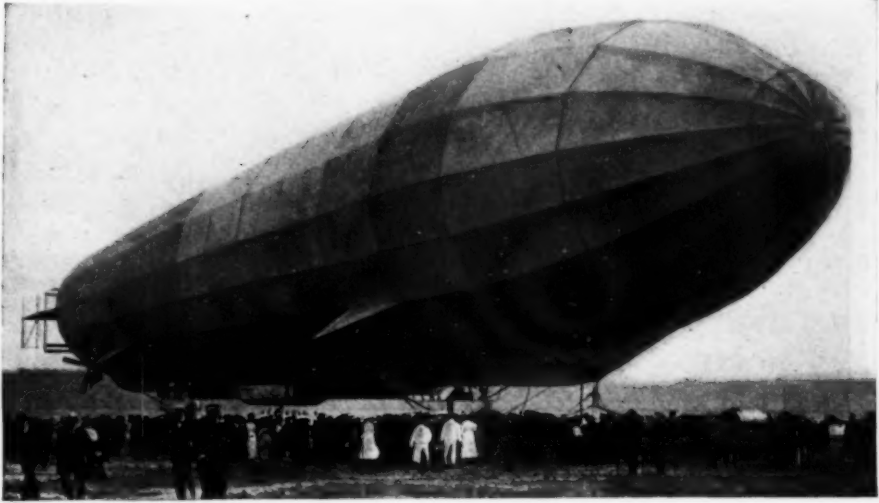
gun. The consequence is that combat begins at distances which formerly were prohibitive.

Along with the greater power of the present powder comes smokelessness. It is impossible to see the man who strikes you down, for his fire makes no smoke to betray his presence. Against an enemy thus equipped the use of smokeless powder is imperative, for with the old gunpowder your exact position would be at once disclosed and would place you at his mercy.

Concealment has become so important that even earthworks must be covered up by turf or branches to prevent destruction by artillery



ONE OF THE HEAVY MOTOR-DRAWN SIEGE-GUNS, WITH "CATERPILLAR FEET," OF THE KIND USED—TWELVE-INCH MUZZLE, CAN HURL TONS OF STEEL, IN A—



ZEPPELIN AFTER A SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT, BROUGHT TO THE GROUND IN THE FIELD. THESE MACHINES REQUIRE A VERY FLAT AND EXTENDED PLAIN FOR A SAFE DESCENT, AND THEIR USEFULNESS IN WAR IS LIMITED BY THAT CIRCUMSTANCE AMONG OTHERS

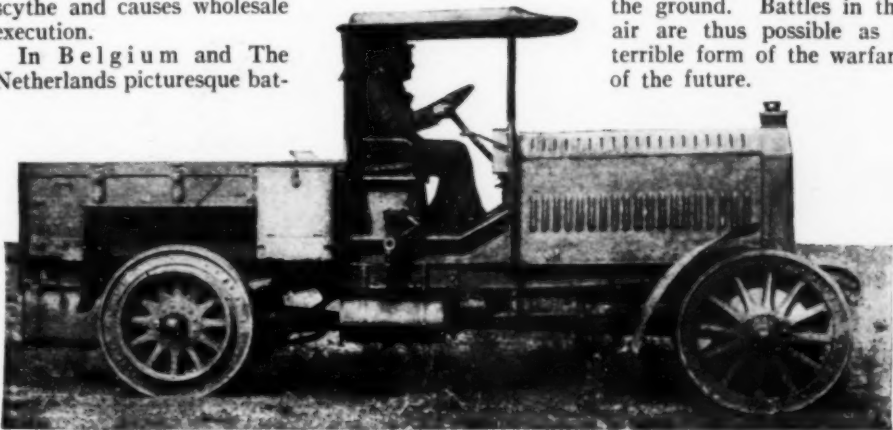
miles away, the gunners serving the pieces being supplied with powerful field-glasses and the pieces completely protected and unseen.

Imagine now a modern infantry rifle with the recoil or "kick" of the gun usefully employed in loading, cocking, and firing the gun at the rate of six hundred shots in a minute. Such an arrangement constitutes the automatic gun, or mitrail-leuse, of which we hear so much. Used on the firing-line under proper conditions of protection, command, and concealment, such a weapon is a veritable scythe and causes wholesale execution.

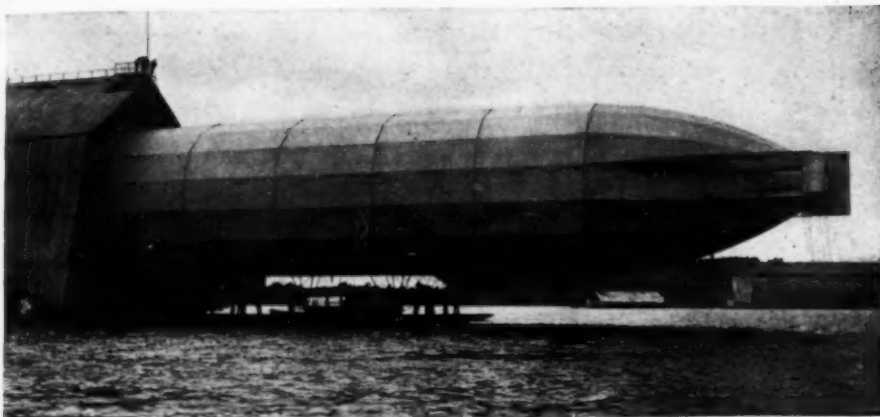
In Belgium and The Netherlands picturesque bat-

teries of machine guns, drawn by dogs, are in vogue. The machine guns, or mitrail-leuses, resemble small cannon on their tiny carriages. The dogs seem to give a good account of themselves in this capacity, as they are docile and intelligent, smaller and more easily concealed than ponies and more easily controlled. They are trained to disregard the noises of the battle-field, and remain quietly in position during combat.

The automatic gun has found very general use on air-ships, for defense as well as for the attack of objects on the ground. Battles in the air are thus possible as a terrible form of the warfare of the future.



—WITH NOTABLE EFFECTIVENESS BY THE GERMAN ARMY, AND ITS TRACTOR. THIS GUN, WITH A —HALF-HOUR, AGAINST FORTIFICATIONS FIVE MILES OFF



ZEPPELIN PARTLY WITHIN ITS HANGAR. THE EXPENSE OF THESE VAST SHEDS AND THE ROOM THEY TAKE UP ARE AMONG THE OBSTACLES TO THE GREATER EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AIR-SHIP AS AN IMPLEMENT OF WAR

The development in the larger guns, or cannon, is quite as marked. The new field-gun owes its great increase in efficiency to the control of its recoil and consequent increase in rapidity of fire as well as to the improvements in powder, projectiles, and guns already mentioned.

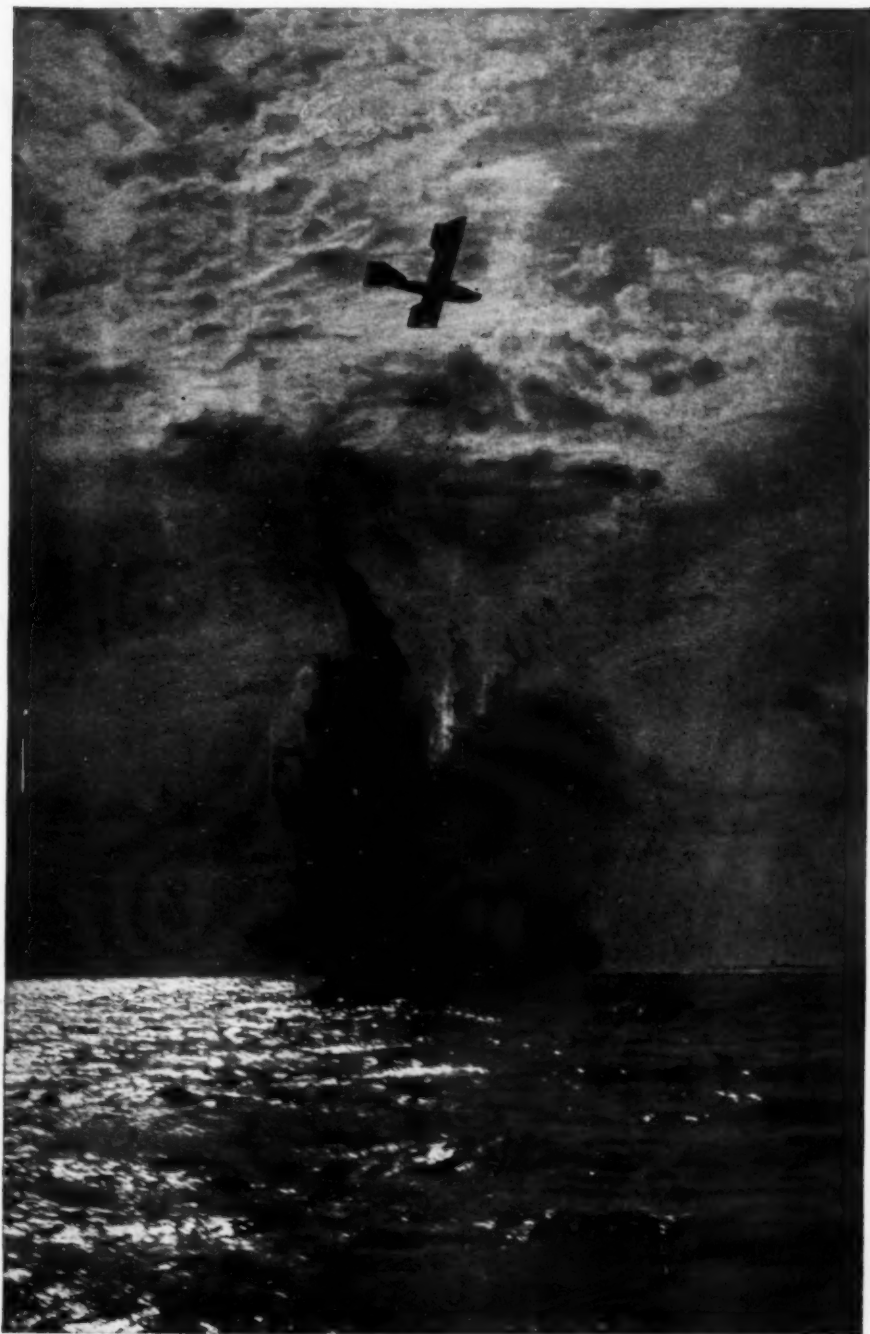
A modern field-battery is so efficient and can begin operations so promptly after locating the enemy that a body of troops exposed even for a few minutes within range of hostile artillery is apt to be destroyed with frightful despatch.

The light cannon of the present, mounted on wheeled carriages, are known collectively as field-artillery. They are usually drawn by horses, but may be mounted on motor-trucks. The projectile fired weighs about fifteen pounds. Two forms are used: the shell and the shrapnel. It is used to destroy walls, earthworks, gun-shields, or other means of protection.

Shrapnel are filled with bullets and explosives and are designed to burst in the air before reaching the enemy. The head of the shrapnel is blown off and



AIR-SHIP GUN ON MOTOR PLATFORM, READY TO BE FIRED AT ANY PROWLER OF THE AIR THAT MAY APPEAR. THIS WEAPON IS EQUIPPED WITH A MECHANISM FOR THE ABSORPTION OF THE SHOCK FROM THE RECOIL



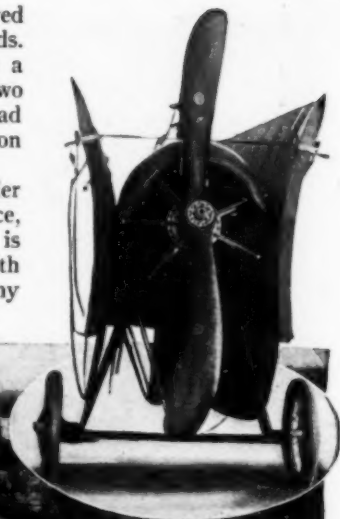
MONOPLANE SCOUTING OVER A HARBOR AT THE MOMENT WHEN A SUBMARINE MINE WAS IN  
PROCESS OF EXPLOSION, LIFTING MANY TONS OF WATER IN AN ERUPTION THAT  
WOULD HAVE PROVED DEADLY TO THE HEAVIEST TYPE OF SHIP  
YET KNOWN TO THE SCIENCE OF NAVAL ENGINEERING



the bullets are scattered over a length of several hundred yards and over a width averaging about twenty-five yards.

With a battalion of twelve guns, firing ten shots a minute, with each gun and each shot liberating two hundred lead balls, it is easy to see what a rain of lead even so small a body of artillery could bring to bear on an attacking force.

Such light guns will not suffice, however, for the heavier work of attacking fortified places. Where, for instance, a city is encircled by a chain of armored forts, it is necessary to bring to the attack far heavier guns, with shot and shell made of forged steel, in order to make any



THREE-INCH GUN FOR FIRING AT AEROPLANES AND DIRIGIBLES. THIS WEAPON PLUNGES A FIFTEEN-POUND PROJECTILE SIX MILES IN A STRAIGHT OVERHEAD DIRECTION, OR HORIZONTALLY, IF NEED BE

TOP PICTURE—FOLDING AEROPLANE, WHICH CAN BE TRANSPORTED BY ROAD WITH FAR GREATER SPEED AND CONVENIENCE THAN THE ORDINARY TYPE.  
CENTER—MACHINE-GUN BATTERY DRAWN BY DOGS, WHICH IS A FEATURE OF THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS

impression on the defenses. Here the problem of transportation intervenes and especial means are generally necessary.

Difficulties of transportation increase greatly with the weight of the gun. The usual form of gun-wheel gives insufficient tread to bear the weight of the heavy guns even on fair roads, and this has brought about the invention of such appliances as "caterpillar feet" or other means of temporarily increasing the supporting surface of the wheels.

Even under these conditions it is necessary to use tractors of great power, since horses, the usual means of traction for the lighter guns, are not suited to this work. The projectiles used by these heavy guns are relatively large, and may even weigh several hundred pounds in extreme cases. The ordinary weight is from sixty to one hundred and twenty pounds.

Still heavier cannon are used in fixed defensive positions, as the problem of transportation does not complicate matters here. A familiar example is seen in coast defenses, which protect harbors from attacks of hostile fleets. The shore guns must be able to meet on at least equal terms those afloat. They must have as great power in the individual gun as well as at least equal rapidity and accuracy of fire.

The heaviest seacoast cannon yet devised launches a projectile weighing something more than a ton. As installed, it shoots about eleven miles, and its extreme range is about twice that.

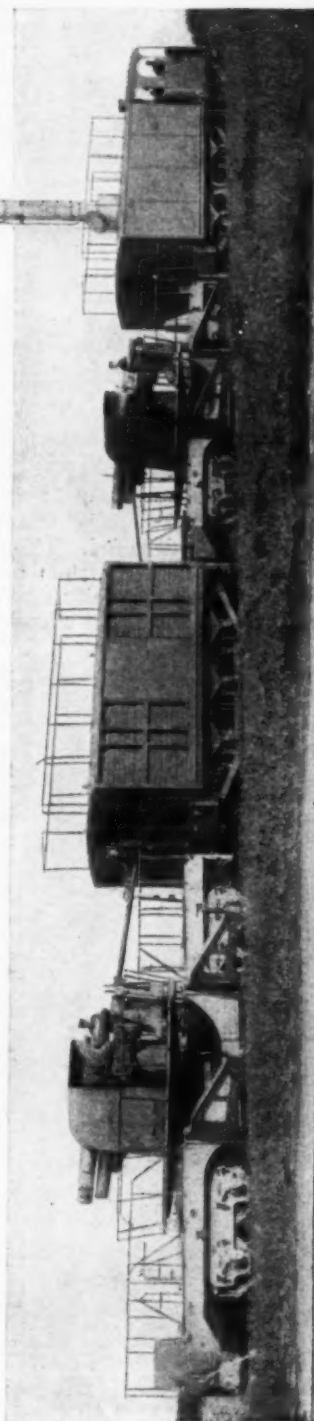
Naval guns use lighter projectiles. The terrible energy of the discharge of these cannon may be estimated from the fact that these heavy shot leave the gun with a speed of about half a mile in a second.

In the heavy coast gun described nearly seven hundred pounds of powder are burned in the gun at each discharge, and this vast charge is consumed in about one-fiftieth of a second.

The shot and shell for these guns explode by the action of a fuse as soon as the projectile strikes. The shell carries a larger bursting charge than the shot and has weaker walls. It is not intended for the perforation of armor, but for explosion on the outside and before the shell breaks up against the armor. The shot, on the other hand, is intended to perforate the armor or other protection before exploding and has strong walls, a smaller cavity for explosives, and a stronger general construction. A delayed-action fuse is used in this case, and the local effect of the interior explosion so produced is terrific. The projectile itself breaks up into thousands of splinters and larger fragments, and to this is added the effect of concussion due to the explosion within a confined space.

Attacks on coast defenses are not conducted by great battle-ships alone. Effective raids by torpedo-boats and destroyers are possible. Against the light and quick-firing guns of these small craft similar weapons are necessary on shore. Such guns are capable of firing shells weighing a hundred pounds each, ten aimed shots a minute being fired by each gun.

Guns and mortars are sometimes placed on cars, and armored trains especially designed for this purpose are run on a track extending along



SCHNEIDER COAST-DEFENSE TRAIN, WHICH IS RUN ON A TRACK ALONG THE SHORE AND ENABLES THE COMMANDER TO SHIFT THE GUNS EASILY TO ANY POINT IN THE LINE OF DEFENSE THAT IS EQUIPPED WITH RAILS. THE FUNNEL-LIKE PROJECTION AT THE RIGHT IS A COLLAPSIBLE OBSERVATION TOWER



ENGLISH MOTOR TRACTOR WHICH CARRIES ITS OWN TRACKS; A VALUABLE DEVICE FOR HAULING HEAVY ARTILLERY OVER BOGGY OR SANDY GROUND. THIS TRACTOR IS AN APPLICATION OF THE "CATERPILLAR FEET" ON A SOMEWHAT LARGER SCALE THAN IN THE ORDINARY "CATERPILLAR" ARRANGEMENT

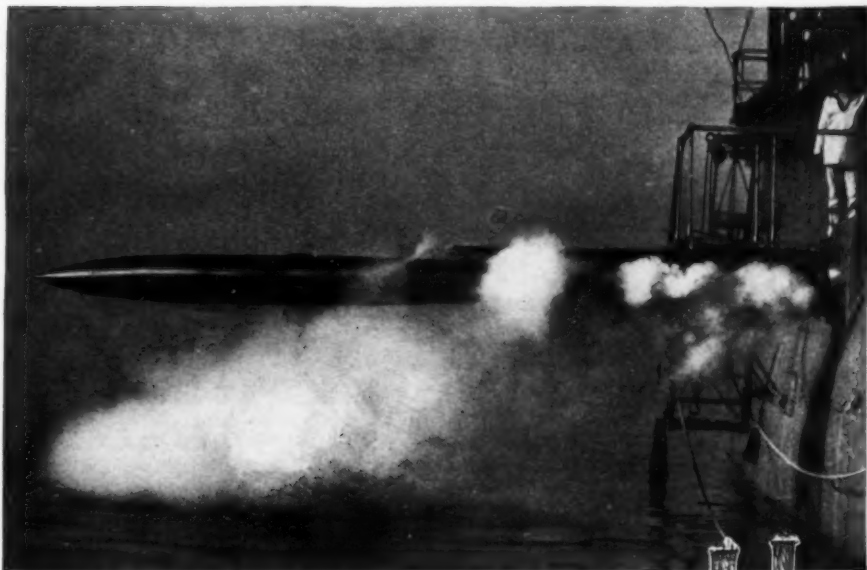
the shore to be defended. This gives to such defensive guns a certain amount of mobility, and is particularly advantageous where it is possible to act offensively in a

limited way in cooperation with naval vessels. Such an arrangement is applied in continental Europe.

Passive defenses for harbors against



KRUPP GUN FOR FIRING AT AIR-SHIPS; MOUNTED ON A FIELD CARRIAGE OF PECULIAR CONSTRUCTION, IT CAN SEND A FIFTEEN-POUND SHELL AT THE RATE OF A MILE IN THREE SECONDS STRAIGHT UP IN THE AIR



THE DREADED DEATH AT SEA; AN EXTRAORDINARY PICTURE SHOWING A TORPEDO AT THE MOMENT OF LEAVING THE STRUCTURE OF A BATTLE-SHIP, BOUND ON ITS SILENT MISSION OF DESTRUCTION

raids may include booms or similar obstructions, placed in relatively shoal water bordering the main ship channel and designed to prevent the passage of destroyers and other light-draft vessels.

Other means of defense are found in heavy mortars which project shells, weighing half a ton, miles into the air, to descend with disastrous effect on the decks of ships. With delayed action the thin decks are easily perforated and an interior explosion is caused. A few such explosions completely disable a ship.

It is also possible to fire shrapnel containing more than ten thousand lead balls from these large guns and mortars. The explosion of such a projectile at a suitable height would distribute



STRIKING VIEW OF THE DECK OF AN AMERICAN BATTLE-SHIP OF THE LATEST TYPE, SHOWING EIGHT OF ITS TWELVE POWERFUL GUNS, EACH CAPABLE OF SENDING A PROJECTILE SEVEN OR EIGHT MILES OVER THE SEA ON ITS DEADLY MISSION



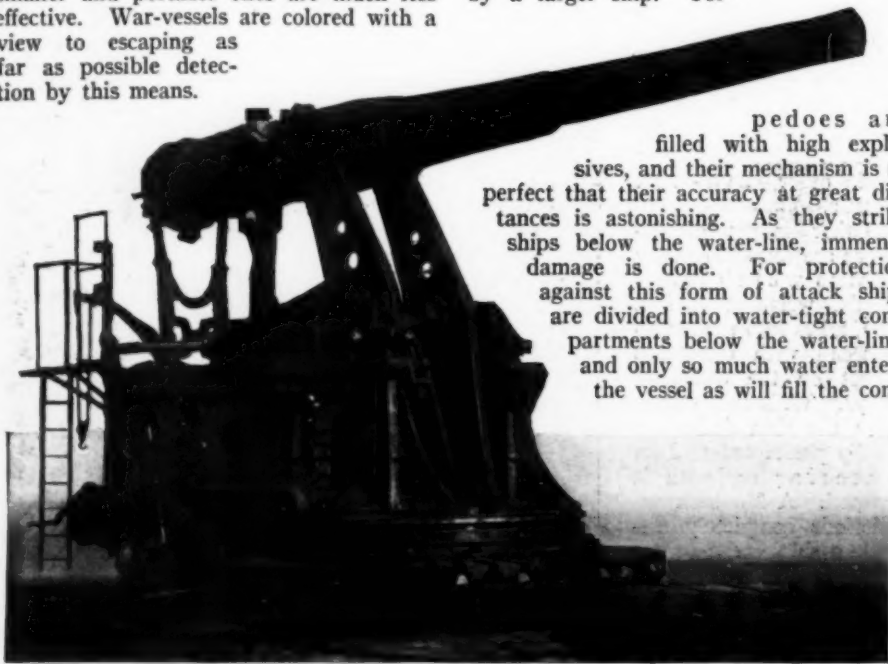
MOTOR TRANSPORTATION FOR AEROPLANES, SHOWING METHOD OF PACKING THE FLYING MECHANISM INTO COVERED VANS, AND A VAN CLOSED UP, READY FOR A QUICK TRIP

one bullet to the square yard over two acres.

Fighting at night, with its attendant uncertainties and risks, necessitates the employment of search-lights. The greatest of these has an illuminative capacity approximating a million candle-power. The smaller and portable ones are much less effective. War-vessels are colored with a view to escaping as far as possible detection by this means.

Field search-lights are transported by means of motors; and as their power plants must accompany them, the size of the search-light is greatly restricted.

In naval warfare the most dreaded weapon is probably the torpedo, whether fired by a submarine or by a larger ship. Tor-



pedoes are filled with high explosives, and their mechanism is so perfect that their accuracy at great distances is astonishing. As they strike ships below the water-line, immense damage is done. For protection against this form of attack ships are divided into water-tight compartments below the water-line, and only so much water enters the vessel as will fill the com-

TEN-INCH COAST-DEFENSE GUN MOUNTED ON DISAPPEARING CARRIAGE, IN USE IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY. THE GUN IS SHOWN IN THE POSITION FOR FIRING. THE RECOIL SWINGS THE CYLINDER DOWN UPON ITS BED AFTER DISCHARGE. THIS WEAPON IS KNOWN AS THE CROZIER-BUFFINGTON GUN AFTER ITS INVENTORS, BOTH OF WHOM ARE GENERALS ON THE ACTIVE LIST





GERMAN FIELD ARTILLERY ON THE MARCH. THE GUN AND CAISSON, WHICH ARE OF THE LIGHTER TYPE, ARE DRAWN BY SIX HORSES. THIS TYPE OF GUN PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE EARLY GERMAN ADVANCE UPON THE ALLIES FALLING BACK UPON PARIS

partments actually injured by the torpedo. In this way the ship could sustain several such injuries and still keep afloat, provided that the injuries were favorably distributed over the hull.

The advent of the submarine has imparted an element of apprehension to naval warfare on account of the difficulty of detecting the approach of such craft, particularly at night. The moral effect of



NEW KRUPP GUN IN PROTECTED MOTOR-CAR; ONE OF THE LATEST DEVICES IN OFFENSIVE WARFARE, WHICH PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE SWEEPING MOVEMENT OF THE GERMANS THROUGH BELGIUM AND NORTHERN FRANCE IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WAR



WAR AEROPLANE, HEAVILY ARMORED, WITH  
ATE THE MACHINE GUN, AND

GUNNER READY TO OPER-  
PILOT AT HIS POST



SCHNEIDER EIGHT-INCH MORTAR ON RAILWAY CARRIAGE FOR RAPID TRANSPORTATION, TO BE FIRED  
FROM RAILROAD TRACKS. OBSERVE THE STEEL WINGS SWUNG OUT TO PREVENT THE  
UPSETTING OF THE CAR PLATFORM BY THE FORCE OF THE RECOIL



SUBMARINE RUNNING AWASH, WITH A SURFACE SPEED OF ABOUT FIFTEEN KNOTS. THIS TYPE OF  
CRAFT SANK THE BRITISH CRUISERS ABOUKIR, CRESSY, AND HOGUE

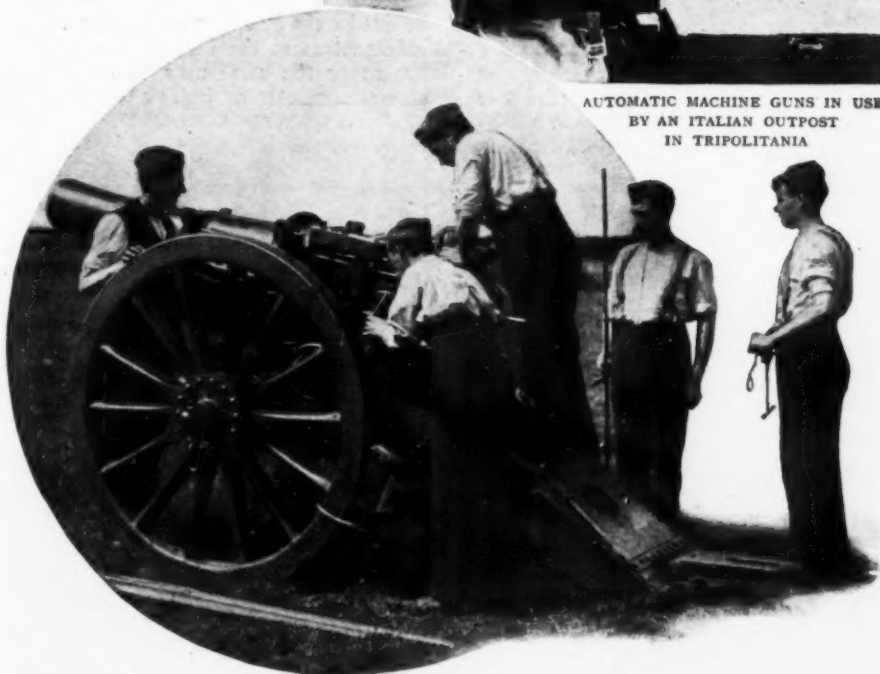
the knowledge that submarines are in the vicinity is very pronounced, and is evidenced by the nervous stress under which individuals labor when exposed to such attacks.

The submarine, however, has serious limitations. Its navigator, to act intelligently, must have means of observation. This is accomplished by the use of a periscope, which projects above the water when the vessel is near the surface.

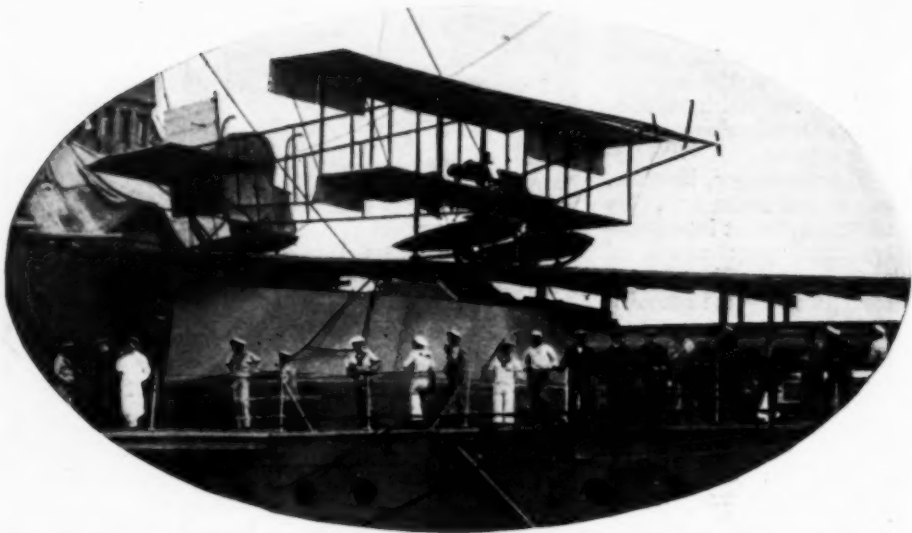
The periscope is liable to be shot away if in the vicinity of war-ships by day. Such an accident makes the submarine temporarily blind. It must come to the surface to get its bearings, and it is then exposed to almost certain destruction.



AUTOMATIC MACHINE GUNS IN USE  
BY AN ITALIAN OUTPOST  
IN TRIPOLITANIA



FIRING A HEAVY HOWITZER OF A TYPE EMPLOYED BY THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE OPERATIONS  
IN FRANCE. THE RECOIL, ALWAYS A GRAVE PROBLEM IN SUCH GUNS, IS ABSORBED BY  
A MECHANISM ON THE CARRIAGE, AND THE CARRIAGE ITSELF IS RIGID DURING  
FIRE. THIS SORT OF GUN HELPED TO DRIVE THE GERMANS BACK  
AFTER THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF INVASION



HYDROAEROPLANE READY FOR FLIGHT FROM A PLATFORM OVER THE DECK OF THE BRITISH WAR-SHIP HIBERNIA. MANY VESSELS OF THE FIRST CLASS IN THE BRITISH NAVY ARE SUPPLIED WITH HYDROAEROPLANE EQUIPMENT AS A VALUABLE ADJUNCT TO THEIR STRICTLY MARINE METHOD OF STRIKING AT AN ENEMY

Mines are another form of explosive carrier. A mine may be designed to explode automatically when the enemy disturbs it; it may be arranged so that it can

be fired only by an operator who uses his judgment as to the best time at which to fire it, or the mine may be designed for either automatic or judgment firing.



BOOM FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MOUTH OF A RIVER OR HARBOR. THIS ARRANGEMENT, WHICH HAS BEEN APPLIED FROM TIME TO TIME TO THE MOUTH OF THE THAMES AT LONDON SINCE THE WAR BEGAN, IS DESIGNED TO PREVENT THE PASSAGE OF LIGHT-DRAFT VESSELS, SUCH AS TORPEDO-BOATS, WHICH COULD ENTER OVER SHALLOW WATER

Used offensively, mines are generally of the automatic kind. In naval warfare they are distributed over the mined area by ships especially fitted for the purpose. It is not beyond possibility for a mine-laying ship to sow a field of mines so that the fleet may maneuver in a way calculated to lead or force the hostile fleet over the mine field.

Air craft form a novel element in modern warfare. We find large, rigid dirigibles, such as the Zeppelin type, with great lifting power and capable of traveling thousands of miles in a single flight. These may carry light guns and a certain amount of explosives in the form of torpedoes. Their offensive power is not very great at present, and their principal value would appear to lie in their ability to reconnoiter strategically, keeping the commanding general informed of conditions at a distance.

These vessels are provided with compartments as described in naval vessels, and though they may be hit by exploding shell, the damage may be localized and permit continued flight, at least for a time. It would take very few such accidents to destroy the vessel, however, and one fair burst in the envelope is frequently sufficient to bring it to the ground.

These ships, besides offering a large and vulnerable target, are helpless in a storm or high wind. Landing is a delicate matter, even in a calm, and a broad and level field is necessary. These considerations greatly restrict the usefulness of this form of air-ship, which requires a special shed or hangar for its protection when not in use.

For these reasons the smaller collapsible dirigible is finding favor for certain uses. This air-ship can be deflated, packed, sent by freight to the point where it is to be used, and inflated by the use of gas generated on the spot or carried under compression.

Explosives would normally be employed by air-ships against arsenals, navy-yards, magazines, and other important structures. Against camps and forts dirigibles can act effectively only when they cannot be seen by the enemy or are beyond the reach of his fire.

As to the effect of explosives dropped from air-ships, buildings suffer most; they produce a demoralizing effect on men, but

their power of inflicting physical damage upon troops and large naval vessels protected by armor is insignificant, though smaller craft, such as destroyers and submarines, may be greatly affected by the activities of air-ships.

A dirigible in the vicinity of the enemy acts only at night. By day it should be accompanied by aeroplanes, which can, however, protect it from the attacks of air craft only. The aeroplane, on the contrary, can be used only during the day. Aeroplanes appear not only in the usual form, but as hydroplanes, which are equipped with floats for naval use, and as folding aeroplanes, which may be folded and packed for transfer from one place to another by motor or other road conveyance. Aeroplanes are generally provided for war purposes with a machine gun and protected by metal plates against the fire of small arms.

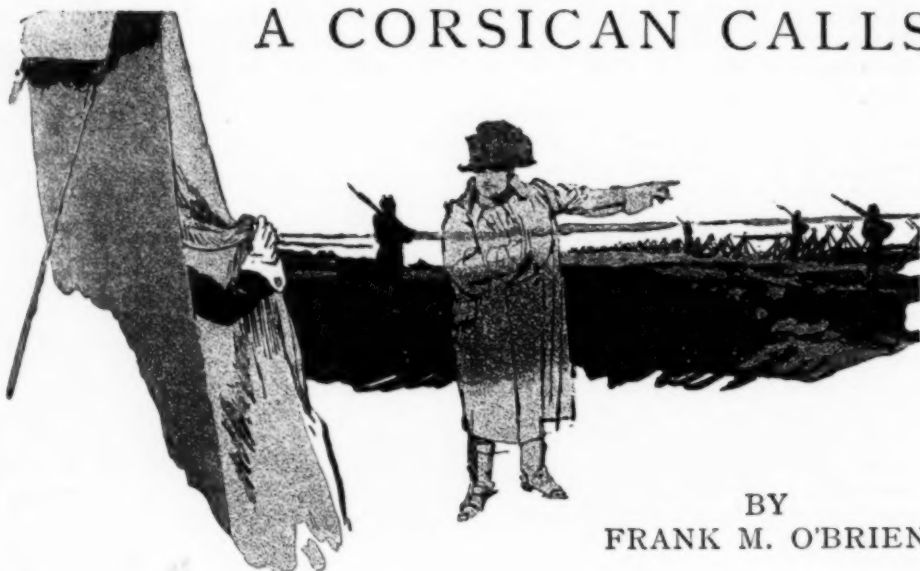
Aeroplanes are used to fight other air craft, to observe the effect of artillery fire, to make local reconnaissances, and to carry messages or important officers from one part of the field to another. Against fire from below aeroplanes are not safe in the vicinity of the enemy at an altitude of less than a mile unless they are shielded. Of course, with rapid and erratic flight an aviator may take risks with reasonable safety, particularly if he does not fly directly above troops.

The dirigible, on account of its steady flight, forms an excellent target for the new special balloon gun, which can reach an air-ship at a height of a mile with ease, the projectile taking less than three seconds to ascend this distance. In addition, it is possible to correct the aim of the gunner by observing the flight of the projectile. This is made possible by a device called a shell-tracer, which causes the shell in its flight to leave a trail of black smoke, or vapor, and shows how much the gunner was wide of the mark.

To sum up, it may be said that air-ships and submarines, though they increase the sphere of warlike activity, are yet in their infancy. They have peculiar and unprecedented powers, but they have also limitations, the effect of which on their efficiency is yet in the balance, but should soon appear. Meanwhile the main reliance of armies will continue to be placed in familiar, but greatly improved weapons.



# A CORSICAN CALLS



BY  
FRANK M. O'BRIEN

**T**HE sun, after a long struggle with the smoky fog, slunk down on his course. The light changed to a dull gray, kindly shutting out the sight of red blotches on greenish-yellow grass, a hideous contrast. There were no sounds except those muffled clicks and snaps that tell when an army is going to rest for the night; few lights except those that gleamed from the tents of the great, far from the trenches where the silent spades were at work. Yet these lights were nearer to the spades and the shadowy trenches than is usual in modern warfare. The War Master had so willed it; it was to be *his* battle, with him in personal command.

Now he sat in a field tent, gazing down the trampled hill to the meadows where his hopes—for the day—had been realized. To-morrow? The general staff would take care of that in its usual wise way—if he approved its plans. None of his own personal staff was with him, for he had signaled, with that abrupt gesture known to all Europe, his wish to be alone. No human being was near, unless one could count as human the rigid figures of the Imperial Guard. These statues, formed in squares and lanes, were as still as the night. One of the lanes stretched from the front of the tent half-way down to the

valley, where the roots of the clover raised their tentacles to sip the fertilizing blood.

This lane was a long, narrowing patch of haze, for the moon had not yet risen to its vain task of trying to shine through the murk. And in this lane, as the War Master watched with eyes that were focused on nothing at all, something appeared. At first it seemed like a gray veil, floating in the outline of a human form. But it could be no human, for the War Master watched for a salute and listened for a challenge, but there was neither along the lane of the Guard. Then, perhaps, it was a shadow of one of the iron eagles that had been sweeping the sky for weeks? The War Master listened for the whirr of a motor, but none came to his ears. The eagles, or most of them, were nesting on the earth for the night, gorging themselves with news of what they themselves had accomplished from their heights.

And now, still without salute or challenge, the silent thing, less like a gray veil and more like the film of a man, came to the tent slowly and entered. Entered confidently, with the air of an equal, and bowed, but only from the neck and not from the hips. There was no mistaking the cut of the cloak and the cock of the hat, any more than there was mistaking the peculiar set of the head on the neck and shoulders. Nor could any one mis-

take the eyes, in which there was a wonderful, cold calmness.

The War Master's eyes were cold, too, returning the bow, but not so calm. A sneer, whether in word or look, is the easiest fashion of covering surprise—or alarm. The War Master did not rise.

"One of the Allies, I believe," he said.

"No," said the visitor in a dull voice, "say, rather, a neutral."

"Indeed!" said the War Master. "Is not Corsica loyal to France?"

"After a man's death," said the visitor, "his politics and fealties do not change; they merely disappear."

"I am pleased to hear that, Herr—"

The visitor raised a shadowy hand in protest.

"M. Bonaparte, if you will, or even Mister. I became accustomed to hearing the latter title aboard the *Bellerophon*."

The War Master did not seem to be listening. He was watching his visitor narrowly.

"I wonder—" he began, and then ceased to speak.

"You wonder," said the visitor, smiling, "whether I am not real. I beg to assure your majesty that I am not real. I understand, of course, the trend of your thoughts. It has occurred to you, as it would occur to most trained men under similar circumstances, that I might be some new output (if the wizardry of war—an impalpable man, free to come and go among the tents of the enemy. I saw the brief flash of annoyance when it came into your mind that if there was any such deviltry possible your gentlemen of the laboratories should have discovered it first."

"Such," said the War Master arrogantly, "is our custom."

"The speed of thought is one of the few human things at which I still may marvel," pursued the Corsican. "You revolved in your mind not only that possibility, but a dozen ways in which the magic might be used. There is nothing *contra* in the rules of war, I believe."

The War Master raised his brows in mock modesty.

"A dozen ways!" he repeated. "You flatter!"

"No," said the Corsican, "at least a dozen, perhaps a score. I know. I should have thought of fifty."

"With such talent," began the War Master, "your total of successes—"

"Let me save your voice," interposed the Corsican blandly. "You would remind me that where I ended in failure at that very spot you began with success. But I would remind you that any town is Waterloo where Waterloo is found."

"A ghostly warning," said the War Master, laughing. He had risen as if to end the interview. It was a habit, and he did not realize his error until he saw the Corsican smiling at it.

"No, not a warning," said the visitor. "It was idle chatter, mere words. But you see I have the whole evening for my errand. Perhaps I expected a more cordial meeting. I thought to be formal, as people were long ago."

"You were not famed for formality," suggested the War Master.

"I had no time for it," returned the Corsican a bit sadly. "But I have plenty now."

"Then you have the advantage of me," said the War Master. "What is your errand? To ask questions? Surely you have no doubt as to the door at which this thing must lie. Or have you read only the *White Paper*?" He had almost forgotten himself and his attitude.

A patient smile crossed the face of the Corsican.

"We do little reading," he said.

"Perhaps," continued the War Master, recovering himself and his bearing, "you come to make a plea for the preservation of something that is historic. There will be plenty of things with 1914 written upon them as the beginning of their history."

"To us," said the Corsican, "years lose their numbers. The Pyramids are scarcely older than the Panama Canal."

The War Master turned upon his visitor with almost savageness.

"Who—who sent you?" he cried.

"Jan B' tanow," replied the Corsican. The War Master's shoulders, raised in suspense, fell to their normal angle.

"I do not remember him," he said.

"You never knew him," said the Corsican. "His name is not in any book that you have seen."

"You knew him?" asked the War Master, "in—in life?"

"I killed him," said the Corsican. "I hanged his son at Lonceville because he

would not guide us through an ambushed valley. He was a peasant. His father was an old man, and bedridden. The shock, administered by me, killed him."

"And now?" said the War Master.

"Now," said the Corsican, "Jan Bedanow sends me on the errand to you."

The War Master took a step forward.

"You! You are at the beck and call of peasants' fathers?" he demanded.

"Where I come from," said the Corsican's even voice, "there are no peasants, no war masters, no first consuls."

"But this errand for Jan Bedanow," said the War Master.

"It will help me," replied the Corsican, "to repair the wrong. In another hundred years, or a thousand, or a million—as men count time—I may do something more, if occasion fortunately should arise, to make amends."

"I see," conceded the War Master. "And what of other—of other things which are in the histories?"

"Each in its turn," said the Corsican, "but Jan Bedanow's matter first."

The War Master leaned across the map-strewn pine table, his eyes aflame.

"You mean," he choked, "that that is all—all there is—beyond—for one like you—or—"

"Or you," said the Corsican in his even tone. "It is all the same for all. The South American who kills with his blow-gun is on even footing with the chancellor who kills with his pen. All the trappings and the titles remain here—for inheritance."

"But in a great cause—" began the War Master.

"I thought mine was one," said the Corsican, "nor was I alone in the opinion. Great cause was written red on the white road to Moscow—and back. But these are unimportant things. The important thing is my errand."

The War Master stood up.

"I shall not change my plans," he said stiffly.

"I do not ask you to," said the Corsican. "My business is not yours, but Jan Bedanow's."

"And that," said the War Master, "is what?"

"On the road near Efineau," answered the Corsican, "you will find at the cross-roads beside the corner of the Gray Forest, a little triangle in which there is a grave.

It is the grave of Jan Bedanow's wife. When your majesty's troops pass that way they would naturally, owing to the width of the column, ride across this triangle of grass. They would, perhaps without meaning to, break down the wooden emblem—an emblem familiar to us both—which lies almost hidden in the weeds."

"Yes," said the War Master.

"What I ask, on behalf of Jan Bedanow, is that this be avoided."

"On the road, near Efineau," repeated the War Master.

"Yes," said the Corsican, "you must pass it on your way to—" He did not speak the word, but his shadowy finger pointed to a place on the map. The War Master sprang back as if from a blow.

"How do you know," he cried, "that I am going *there*?"

The Corsican smiled wearily.

"I would have known," he said, "even if I did not come from where everything is known. I would have known because I knew, in the years ago, the minds of men who plan on paper. I would have known that you were going there. And I, at the other end, would have been waiting for you."

"Will *they* be ready for me to-morrow?" whispered the War Master.

The Corsican shrugged his shoulders.

"Have they my mind?" he countered; "or even Wellington's?"

"But tell me!" cried the War Master. "It were better for the whole world—"

"The whole world!" mocked the Corsican. "A tiny, whirling thing on which there is nothing so important to me now as the grave of Jan Bedanow's wife. Good night, your majesty!"

The tent flaps fluttered as he went. Now it was darker and the eye of the War Master could not follow. He seized the telephone.

"Von Zohn," he said to the marshal at the other end of the line, "I have decided to ride at the head of the column in the morning—at least as far as the corner of the Gray Forest."

Then he leaned back and let his gaze, once more unfocused, fall upon the lane of the Guard. The moonlight, seeping through the disappearing haze, glowed feebly on the brass eagles of the helmeted giants.

"And that is all?" he muttered. "Nothing more than that? I wonder!"

# TO CERTAIN WAR-POETS

by Richard Le Gallienne

**T**HE bugles have blown—O have done with your singing!  
As a gnat's is your song in the roar of the guns,  
No man's work is this, colored words to be stringing,  
Deeds are the songs the world asks of its sons;  
Too late for the pen paper wars to be fighting,  
When the bayonets in blood are doing the writing.

How green are your gardens—how trampled and ruddy  
Those gardens of swords, with dead faces for flowers,  
Where the stream 'mid its rushes runs frightened and bloody,  
And the soft skies of summer rain bullets for showers;  
Ah! poet, it seems a poor trade to be plying,  
When all that is left of brave living is dying.

When the dead are brought home with a light on their faces,  
Of your tears, if you will, you shall make us a song,  
Singing them home to their safe laureled places,  
With the sweetness of words for the strength of the strong;  
But now is no time for your musical talking,  
When death and the war gods are out at their hawking.



# SPEAKING OF ANCESTORS

BY JOHN B. LOVE



YOU have the nose of a scoundrel," said Professor Wissenschaft.

I smiled. My companion was a scientist, and scientists are the most impersonal of beings. I have known my friend to break out, in the scientific habit, from some abstraction of his own into the most irrelevant observations. I was vexed, however, for my valet, Hawkins, was with me, and I noticed a peculiar glee on the man's face. Hawkins, of course, did not have intelligence enough to know that my scientific friend meant no more than exactly what he said—that I had the nose of a scoundrel.

The scientist turned my chin with his hand to draw the light upon it.

"I have been studying you," he went on. "I discover some peculiar lines. Nothing is more clear than this: the women of your family were women of the most disreputable character—utterly depraved—so debased that they did not comprehend, let alone practise, the virtues."

I could not understand the wild delight on Hawkins's face.

"Sir," I said with heat, rapping angrily upon the table, "this is too much. I am a Mondragon, sir. Remember, please, the Mondragons were counts in Normandy before Duke William crossed to England. That, remember further, was in 1066." With yet more dignity, I added: "My family have been Mondragons ever since. You touch upon an insult, sir."

Hawkins was always cowed when I used that tone.

"Fudge!" said my friend. "Be scientific. You had two parents, didn't you? And four grandparents? And eight great-grandparents? Yes. Allow three generations to the century." He took out a pad and pencil and figured for a moment. "Ah! Just as I thought. In the year 1066," he resumed, "you had living just 14,217,216 ancestors. Figure it yourself.

There's no mistake about it. In the days of good Queen Bess the population of England was only six million. In the days of William the Conqueror there were only two million. That is to say, Mr. Mondragon, you had seven times as many ancestors in the year 1066 as there were people in all England. I mean," he explained, "that you are the lineal descendant of every cutthroat, every murderer, every adventuress who lived in England in those troublous times."

I had often talked to Hawkins, when he dressed me in the morning, about the noble Mondragons, and I was angered that he should take a dark yet obvious pleasure in what Professor Wissenschaft had said.

"It is a pity to crush your family pride in this scientific way, but there is this consolation for you," went on my friend. "True, you are descended from all the rogues in England, but then you are descended as well from all the gentlemen—the poets, the thinkers, the warriors, the noblemen. All have contributed to your composition."

I am not a scientist, but I am always open to a new and illuminating thought. I never before felt so proud of being an Englishman. I conceived for the first time the thought that I, an Englishman, embodied in my person the substance of every Englishman alive when William crossed the Channel. I was soul of their soul, bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh—the concentrated essence of a nation. An entire people was compounded to create me, and the deeds of every worthy Englishman were mine. The thought seemed very noble.

"Hexcuse my h interruption, sir," said Hawkins, "but do I hunderstand, sir, that Hi, for hinstance, am descended from the dukes and lords of Hingland, sir?"

"You certainly are, Hawkins," replied my scientific friend. "And what is more, Hawkins, you and every one of us had more ancestors two thousand years ago



than there were people living in all Europe at that time. Interracial marriage took place then as now. You carry in your blood the strain of David, King of Israel, and are his lineal descendant. The Persian Xerxes, the Athenian Alcibiades, and all the great, the lowly, the depraved, and the noble live again in you. There is scarcely a doubt, Hawkins, that you bear the blood of even Cæsar himself."

While such truths are proper to amuse a gentleman like myself, I felt resentment that my friend should talk so plainly before Hawkins. There should, of course, be nothing in common between the classes.

I regret to say that Hawkins is occasionally addicted to the cup that cheers. I am inclined that way myself, but a 'apse of the sort, however permissible in a gentleman of my station is insufferable in a man

who has to make his living. He was a trifle under the influence of liquor yesterday when my wife summoned him. My wife, you know, is descended from the Earls of Suffolk—the older earls—extinct in the male line since the War of the Roses.

"You have excellent manners, Hawkins," she chanced to remark. "I have often thought you ought to have been born a gentleman."

"Hi was," he retorted. "Hi am descended from the kings of Hingland. But the Mondragons! I know them," he added with a silly leer. "They derive from hall the cutthroats and murderers in Hingland. And Mr. Mondragon! God! 'E 'as the nose of a scoundrel."

My wife looked at him for a moment.

"Hawkins, you are discharged," she said.

## VERY RAW RECRUITS

BY E. K. MEANS

"WAR! War! War!"



Colonel Tom Gaitskill sat in an easy chair on the wide veranda, stooping at intervals to pick up another newspaper from the bundle which lay at his feet. He turned the pages eagerly, scanning the head-lines which bore the messages of conflict from the cannon-shaken and ensanguined battle-fields of Europe.

On the bottom step of the veranda sat a giant negro, the gnarled fingers of his monstrous hands interlocked, his elbows resting on his massive knees, his sweaty, coal-black face shining like new paint, his dull eyes appearing to drink in the splendors of the evening sunset.

From his high point of vision he could see below him the village of Tickfall occupying a sandy plain bordered by dense swamps. Completely surrounding the village and edging the swamps, like pigs lying around the dam and drawing their sustenance therefrom, were half a dozen negro settlements known as Craw, Buck, Shiny, Dirty-Six, Shoo-Fly, and Hell's

Half-Acre. The shifting wind brought to the nostrils of the two men the rank smell of greasy cooking as the negroes prepared supper, or the acrid odor of burning rags where the darkies smoked the mosquitoes out of their cabins for the night.

Colonel Gaitskill's glance wandered from his paper to the negro's solid back, and he grinned. He knew the darky was not engaged in thought, but had merely sunk into that idealless inertia which only animals, negroes, and very small children can achieve; for Hitch Diamond's head was solid bone clear through except for a spoonful of jelly somewhere which made his powerful body an efficient fighting-machine.

"Hitch," Colonel Gaitskill grinned, "have you ever heard of Jack Johnson?"

"Dat nigger prize-fighter champeen of de worl'?" Hitch replied eagerly. "Yes, sah, I knows 'bout him. I's gwine fight dat nigger some day an' be de champeen myse'f. I's de White Hope."

Gaitskill heard this last statement with amazement, but he did not dispute it. Instead, he said with a chuckle:

"I see that Jack Johnson has come to the aid of France in this international war."

There was a long silence. Gaitskill knew this information was absolutely unintelligible to Hitch, and he waited patiently for a reply, sure that the negro would say something ridiculous.

"War, kunnel?" Hitch asked curiously. "I figgered dat de damyanks had done all been licked."

"Not yet," Gaitskill laughed. "A few of them are fighting now in France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, and some other places."

"How did Jack Johnsing git in on it, kunnel?" Hitch inquired, as he climbed the steps of the veranda and stood by the white man's chair.

"Jack has contributed his automobiles to the French army," Gaitskill answered with a flourish of his newspaper.

Hitch looked at that particular paper, then glanced down at the bundle of them, and his eyes widened.

"Is dat how come all dat black paint is wasted on dem papers?"

"Yes," Gaitskill laughingly prevaricated, as he spread out a number of papers whose big, black head-lines stretched across the front page. "They printed the paper in large letters with black ink in honor of Jack Johnson."

Professional jealousy boiled in the heart of Hitch Diamond. For Hitch, too, was a prize-fighter, engaging in fistic combats along the Mississippi River, where men pounded half-naked bodies with bare fists. He stood for a moment in deep meditation, then said earnestly:

"Marse Tom, dat Jack Johnsing ain't such a much fighter. I kin lick dat coon wid one of my hands tied to a fence-post an' one of my foots kotch in a bear-trap. Cain't you an' me fix up some kind of shake-down so I kin git in de paper, too?"

Gaitskill laughed. Then he said:

"You might establish a recruiting-station, Hitch, organize a military company, appoint yourself captain, and offer your services to the European war-gods."

"Would dat git me plenty black paint on de paper?" Hitch inquired, pointing to the big head-lines.

"I'm sure it would," Gaitskill grinned.

"Will de cote-house git me fer onticin' labor away?"

"I think not."

"Whut side muss I fight wid, kunnel?"

"That's for you to determine."

"Who's fightin' which?"

"Just at this time the German Kaiser is fighting against Belgium, France, and England."

"Huh," Hitch commented, "one man fightin' ag'in' three. He muss had a punch in bofe hands."

"No doubt," Gaitskill chuckled.

Eager to act upon this great suggestion, the negro turned to go. At the foot of the steps he stopped and said:

"I ain't got no place to 'cruit dese niggers, Marse Tom."

"You may use my old cotton-shed down by the sand-pit."

"Dat 'll suit fine!" Hitch exclaimed, then, after a moment's thought, he inquired: "Whut 'll be de endin' of dis war, Marse Tom? Will de damyanks git licked agin'?"

"I don't know, Hitch," was the answer. "I presume some old Johnnyreb like me will have to go over there and intervene."

"Yes, suh, dat 'll be de endin'," Hitch agreed readily. "Ef you really goes, Marse Tom, dem niggers will stop fightin' right brief."

Hitch turned and walked out of the yard and down the hill.

Gaitskill watched him until the giant form was swallowed up in the dusk of the evening, then he suddenly broke into a loud laugh.

The meaning of Hitch's last remark dawned upon him: because Jack Johnson had helped the French army Hitch inferred that all the armies in Europe were composed of negroes!

## II

BEFORE the advent of the compress and the railroad in Tickfall Gaitskill had built an immense shed to house the cotton which came from the surrounding country. Modern transportation facilities had caused him to abandon this shed.

But now the sliding doors had been pushed back. From the top of a long pole which had been sharpened at one end and stuck upright in the ground before the door fluttered a red bandanna handkerchief. The recruiting-station was open.

On two old chairs just within the door sat Hitch Diamond and his manager, Prince Total, both engaged in smoking strong Perique tobacco in ill-smelling corn-cob pipes.

"Prince," Hitch said to the pop-eyed negro, "dese here niggers ain't jinin' dis army. I 'speck I'll have to send a coon to hunt a coon."

"Dat's good argufyin'," Prince agreed.

"I makes you dis trade," Hitch added after a moment's thought. "You go out an' rustle up dem niggers to jine an' I pays you ten cents per each."

"Whar you gwine git dat dime per each?" Prince wanted to know.

"Git it outen deir pockets," Hitch declared.

"Dat sounds resomble." Prince knocked the ashes from his pipe and reached for his hat.

Ten minutes later the first volunteer entered, the Rev. Vinegar Atts, a fat, round-headed, chunky ducky, with an important manner, a voice like a bull, and a smooth, cherubic face which, under mental strain, resembled the countenance of a big, fat baby just tuning up to cry.

"Prince is been argufyin' me 'bout dis new lodge," Vinegar boomed, as he sat down on the one unoccupied chair. "Whut I wants to know is dis: does us git plenty to eat in de army?"

"Shorely," Hitch replied in positive tones. "Jiners gits steady rations eve'y Saddy night. Bacon, salt, meal, an' merlasses."

"I jines right now," Vinegar exclaimed heartily. "I's a Mefdis preacher, an' I requires tol'able reg'lar vittles."

"De password sets you back a dime," Hitch said, as he led the preacher off to one side.

Vinegar produced the coin, Hitch whispered the magic word, and the parson walked out, well pleased with his trade.

Figger Bush entered next, a black, good-natured negro, whose only use for his coconut-head was to support his battered hat and furnish a background for a stubby, shoe-brush mustache.

"Ef we fights, who's gwine furnish de de—boxin'-gloves?" Figger inquired.

"We fights wid guns," Hitch explained.

"Who do?" Figger demanded, showing the whites of his eyes.

"Us do."

"Whut dat yuther nigger gwine be doin' wid his gun?" Figger inquired.

"He'll drap it an' git when he sees us Tickfall niggers comin'," Hitch assured him as he pocketed the dime and gave Figger the password.

A few minutes later Prince ushered in Pap Curtain, a yellow negro with an insidious manner and a baboon face which contained shifty eyes and a mouth that sneered.

"Does we have to wuck in de army?" Pap inquired.

"Naw. We jes' walks aroun' an' totes a gun."

"Us walks whar to?"

"Don't make no diffunce," Hitch explained. "Jes' keep gwine an' look fer somepin to shoot."

"Is killin's keepin's? Is we 'lowed own whut we shoots?"

"Suttinly."

"How much wages does us git?"

"Reg'lar rations, clothes an' gun, an' fawty dollars per month per each."

"Dat's putty high-priced pay, ain't it?" Curtain queried.

"Dis am public wucks, an' dey always pays high."

"Does we lay off Saddy atternoons an' Sundays?"

"Of co'se we does, nigger," Hitch declared with an air of disgust. "Shake date dime outen yo' britches an' take dis password an' git!"

When Curtain had gone Hitch turned to Prince Total and said:

"Prince, atter dis you fotch dem niggers here in a gang. One nigger by hisse'f alone axes too many damfool questions. Herd 'em up an' dey'll sign deir lives away an' never ax nothin'. You know how niggers is. Bunch 'em. I's tired holdin' out my han' fer jes' one dime!"

"Gimme dem three dimes you already tuck in," Prince demanded.

"Naw, suh, nigger!" Hitch proclaimed. "Three dimes signifies three drams, an' you ain't been outen de pen'tench'ry but two years an' you ain't use to booze yit. When you gits a hunderd niggers I'll gib you perzackly ten dollars."

Thus admonished, Prince went out again. It was Saturday, and hundreds of negroes were in the town from the plantations, many of whom would remain over Sunday. By four o'clock in the afternoon Hitch had secured his company and Prince Total was shaking the ten dollars in small silver into his capacious, hungry pocket.

The password Hitch had given the negroes was also a command: "Meet me here to-night in dis cotton-shed."

So by eight o'clock that evening one hundred negroes had assembled, standing in awkward attitudes against the walls or grouped under the flaring gasoline torches which had thrown their dim light upon many a pugilistic ring where Hitch Diamond had fought to victory.

Hitch was repeating his conversation with Gaitskill.

"Marse Tom specify dat Jack Johnsing gib all his ortermobiles to de war. I spoke him right back: 'Kunnel,' ses I, 'cain't dese here Tickfall niggers do somepin fer de army, too?' An' Marse Tom, he 'spon' to me: 'Suttinly,' he ses, 'cruit all dese niggers up an' let 'em go dar wid you an' fight.' Dat's how come dis new lodge is started."

"Whar do we go at?" one of the men asked.

"Marse Tom know," Hitch replied, scratching his head. "Ax him."

"Who does we fight ag'in?" Pap Curtain demanded.

"I ain't right shore," Hitch said, "but I thinks we fights ag'in' de Kusser."

"Who he?" Rev. Vinegar Atts asked.

"I dunno," Hitch said. "'Pears like he done challenged all dem yuther niggers to a fight."

"Niggers!" Prince Total howled. "Haw! Haw! Haw! Hitch, you is de mos' igernantest ramus I ever did see. Dar ain't no niggers in Yurope 'scusin' Jack Johnsing. Dey's all white folks!"

"My Gawd, brudders!" Vinegar Atts bawled, as he started on a trot toward the door. "Run fer yo' lives! Dis here Hitch Diamond is a *plottin' ag'in' de whites!*"

Dreadful memories of the Kuklux flashed across the minds of the negroes, and Vinegar's warning was sufficient.

One minute later Hitch and Prince stood alone in the big cotton-shed glaring at each other. Prince spoke first, his tone pregnant with disgust.

"Dat big ole fat preacher always heads de list of de migrashun niggers."

"You started dis migrashun by pullin' de stopper outen de wrong bottle wid yo' mouf," Hitch accused him.

"Dey shore did ax dis cotton-shed good-by," Prince remarked with regret.

"How you gwine git 'em back?" Hitch inquired.

"Huh," Prince snorted. "Ain't to-morrer Sunday? Ain't I got dis pocketful of dimes to 'gage a brass band wid?"

"Dat's right," Hitch grinned.

"To-morrer, atter dinner, you an' me leads de peerade," Prince announced. "Eve'y nigger whut don't foller behine dat band ain't got no legs."

"Dat suits me," Hitch said contentedly. "But I tells you dis: I's got it proned inter me dat Elder Vinegar Atts is gwine collide wid dis fist of mine befo' I gits dis army good started. An' when he do, he'll collapse up into nothin' but a ball of squish."

### III

IN front of the Hen-Scratch saloon in Dirty-Six Hitch Diamond was issuing final instructions to the ten musicians of the Tickfall Colored Band.

"You niggers toot some lively tunes outen dem hawns—"

"S'pose we start wid 'It Is Well Wid My Soul,'" the leader of the band interrupted Hitch to announce as he turned to his performers.

"Naw!" Hitch howled. "Dis ain't no fun'ral. Nobody ain't got kilt in dis army yit!"

"Less play 'Homesick Home,'" the fat manipulator of the big bass drum proposed.

"Naw!" Hitch bawled. "Dese niggers is gotter to go 'way to de war. Don't start no doubts 'bout de gals dey leaves b'hine 'em."

"How would 'Onwud, Christyum Sojers,' do?" the squint-eyed cornet-player inquired mildly.

"Hell fire, nigger!" Hitch bellowed. "Dis ain't no Sunday-school! Play somepin peart!"

Thus instructed, the band formed in the middle of the street and the parade began, the drummer pounding his drum like mad, while the other nine appeared to be trying to commit suicide by blowing their brains out.

The tune was "Rescue the Perishing."

Every man played according to the dictates of his own conscience, but they made music. Discord is foreign to a negro's nature. If a drunken negro should wander into a music-room in the dark, stumble over a rug, and sit down forcibly and unexpectedly upon the keyboard of a piano he would strike a perfect chord.

They had not gone forty steps when the procession began to swell with volunteers. Before they left Dirty-Six one hundred



were marching; passing through Shiny, they gained as many more; Craw, Hell's Half-Acre, Buck, and Shoo-Fly added their quota, until nearly five hundred negroes stepped high as they marched through the deep sand, like a rooster wading through mud.

Scores of little negro boys trailed along behind, capering, dancing, laughing, their bare feet kicking up the dust. Behind them, well out of reach of flying missiles, trailed every hound dog in Tickfall, their wistful faces close to the ground as they nosed the tracks of the tramping men, their pleading, china-blue eyes almost tearful as, at intervals, they sat down upon their haunches, elevated their noses, and contributed a lugubrious accompaniment of howls to the blare of the band.

The procession at last swung out of the negro settlements and crossed the town to the cotton-shed. Arriving there, Hitch changed his orders to the band.

"Lead 'em to de sand-pit!" he bellowed. "Don't stop here!"

When Colonel Gaitskill built a railroad spur into the Little Mocassin swamp to get out timber he excavated hundreds of tons of material for his railroad fill from an immense sand and gravel bed a quarter of a mile in the rear of his home. This basin-shaped sand-pit would have contained two acres, the floor almost level except for a slight eminence in the center surmounted by an immense pine stump. For a number of years this natural amphitheater had been used as an assembly ground by the negroes on occasions of this sort.

The Tickfall army marched into the sand-pit and halted at the pine stump, disposing itself at ease around this eminence and waiting for something to happen next.

Hitch Diamond promptly mounted to the top of the stump and began:

"Brudders of de lodge: War is done bust loose some more. De damyanks is at it agin. Marse Tom Gaitskill say he gwine over dar an' intervene. All us niggers muss go wid him an' he'p fight. He say Jack Johnsing done already got in on it. Eve'y nigger gits free hats, free shoes, free clothes, free grub, free guns, an' plenty ice-water on de way. De band plays eve'y day excusin' Sunday."

"Who's fightin' who?" a voice demanded.

"De Englishes, de Begums, de Frances, an' de Shermans!" Hitch informed him in stentorian tones.

"Who we gwine fight fer?" somebody wanted to know.

"We ain't settle on no side yit," Hitch bellowed. "Dat am to be decided right now."

"Let 'em vote!" Prince Total squealed.

"Dat's right!" Hitch exclaimed. "All you niggers line up an' git ready to vote yo' views."

Instantly a long, crooked line of negroes stretched across the sand-pit like a monstrous black snake. The adults stood erect and motionless, but the irrepressible negro boys presented a ceaseless round of activities.

"Now, den," Hitch bawled. "You niggers listen: Ever' who is in favor of fightin' wid de Begums step outen dat line!"

The line wavered, but no man moved.

"Who is de Begums?" Pap Curtain wanted to know.

"I dunno," Hitch Diamond answered.

"I don't reckon dey's qual'ity. I ain't never heerd tell of no fambly named dat."

"I favors wuckin' fer folks I don't know nothin' 'bout," Pap Curtain yelled as he stepped out of the line. "Me an' de white folks is done loss our rep in dis town. We knows each odder too well."

About fifty men promptly saw the wisdom of this and moved toward Curtain, who proudly led them to one side of the pit. Thus they joined the Belgian army.

"Ever' who favors fightin' wid de Englishes, step out!" Hitch shrieked.

"I knowed a man named dat once," Figger Bush exclaimed. "He sold me five bottles of med'cine to make my hair straight. But I requires more'n dat to take de kinks outen my woolly head, but I ain't never seed dat white man nowhar since dat time. Mebbe dat fambly knows 'bout dat med'cine. I jines wid de Englishes."

"Me, too!" about fourscore woolly-headed negroes shouted, and with wild yells they united their fortunes with King George of England.

"Ever' who favors de Frances, git out!" Hitch whooped.

"Ain't Jack Johnsing fightin' wid dem?" a little negro boy squealed.

"Yep!" Hitch said.

"I jines wid de champeen of de worl'," the boy screamed, and cake-walked across



the sand, while all the other little coons jiggled along behind him.

"Now, brudders," Hitch Diamond boomed. "I jines de Shermans. Marse Tom say one of dem Shermans named Kyzy or Kasey or somepin like dat done challenged all dem yuthers. Eve'ybody come over to dis stump an' jine wid me!"

A large number came, but Hitch did not get the following he expected.

"Whut ails you niggers?" he screamed to the others who had refused to espouse the cause of the German Kaiser.

"We don't jine no Shermans," one of them answered. "My ole mammy lived in Georgy endurin' de war an' she tole me dat de Jin'ral Shermans is de meanes' damyanks whut is!"

Hitch stood glaring at them a moment, then he turned to Prince Total and inquired:

"Prince, dese here niggers is all fightin' fer diffunt people. How kin I lead 'em to de army?"

"Gawd knows," Prince replied in a perplexed tone. "You better fix up some kind of humbug to git 'em togedder."

"Hey, you niggers!" Hitch bellowed. "Git togedder! No nigger ain't 'lowed to flock to hissef! Bunch up here aroun' me like a litter of pups!"

Not a negro moved. Hitch felt like an evangelist who calls for mourners and gets no response.

Then out of the line where he had maintained his position from the first stepped the Rev. Vinegar Atts.

"Eve'ybody listen to me!" he whooped. "Dis here army is all busted up in little ricks. Dat ain't no way to do! Less all pig togedder on de religion side!"

"Whut religion is dese people?" Hitch Diamond asked, glad to act upon the suggestion.

"I dunno!" Atts answered. "Dey's strangers to me."

"Brudders!" Hitch exclaimed. "I motions dat Prince Total be sont up to Marse Tom Gaitskill's big house to ax him 'bout deir religions. While Prince is gone ever'body set down!"

#### IV

COLONEL GAITSKILL's talk with Hitch Diamond had been the whimsical fancy of the moment and had been promptly forgotten. So he was not prepared for a conversation with Prince Total.

Prince found him sitting on his veranda surrounded by crumpled newspapers and cigar-ash.

"Marse Tom," he began, "Hitch Diamond sont me up here to ax you whut religion dey am."

"Who? What?" Gaitskill queried.

"De Shermans an' de Begums an' dem yuthers," Prince informed him. "Elder Atts say he ain't 'quainted wid 'em an' he ain't know whut chu'ch dey follers atter, an' Hitch sont me up to ax yo' view 'bout dat."

Gaitskill leaned back in his easy chair and glared at Prince, his face assuming the Southern white man's invariable expression of disgust, impatience, and contempt when he can't understand a negro. Prince saw the look and stepped back.

"Yes, suh," he said placatingly. "Dat's whut Hitch done."

"Say all that again!" Colonel Gaitskill snapped as he straightened up in his chair to listen.

"De niggers at de sand-pit, Marse Tom—dey's all mixed up in deir minds. Hitch cain't lead 'em nowhar—dey's all split up in gangs, an' dey 'low dey's gwine fight fer de Englishes an' de Begums, an' all dem yuther new famblies. You know how niggers is, Marse Tom. Now dey's jes' come to a dead stan' an' dar dey stan's."

"My Lord!" Gaitskill groaned, clawing at his snow-white hair with both hands. "A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing!"

"Yes, suh," Prince muttered, twisting his wool hat into a tight wad with both powerful hands.

"What in the name of mud are you trying to say?" Gaitskill exclaimed in exasperation.

"I dunno," Prince replied apologetically. "Elder Vinegar Atts say 'vide 'em up accawdin' to religion."

Then Gaitskill perceived that Prince had been sent with a message the purport of which the humble messenger did not understand. None was more skilled than this white man in the art of chasing the elusive idea through the benighted labyrinths of a negro's mind. So he changed his manner completely and asked in a quiet tone:

"What have you been doing the last two or three days, Prince?"

"I been he'p organize dat new lodge you an' Hitch is a gittin' up."

This answer offered no enlightenment, but the colonel persevered:

"What do the niggers think about it?"

"Dey likes it. Dey says ef Jack Johnsonsing kin fight wid de Frances, dey's gwine fight, too."

For the first time Gaitskill felt a nibble at the hook of understanding. He asked:

"Who told you about Jack Johnson?"

"You tole Hitch an' Hitch tole us. He say you an' him wus gwine organize a army. We 'cruited 'em fust in de ole cotton-shed—"

Ah! Gaitskill remembered and understood.

He sat for a moment, his eyes twinkling, the lips curved about his cigar twisting into a smile. Then he asked:

"What's the trouble in the sand-pit, Prince?"

"Vinegar Atts say we oughter fight fer de side whut is most religion. Dey sont me to ax you whut is de mos' religion side."

"I understand," Gaitskill laughed. "Return to the sand-pit and report that, generally speaking, the nations now engaged in war are Lutheran, Catholic, and Episcopalian in religion."

Prince wheeled, leaped down the steps, and went across the field in the rear of the house on a swift run.

Gaitskill finished his cigar.

Then there came around the house on feet so proud they seemed to spurn the earth they trod the most beautiful horse in Louisiana. He was as black as fresh tar, and under the blazing sun his body glowed like polished ebony—full eye, straight neck, small head, clean limbs, fine hair, barrel-shaped body—which since the days of Vergil have been the sure marks of a good horse. His velvety nose quivered in mute recognition of his master and seemed to invite him to a ride.

Gaitskill sat for a moment chuckling to himself, then reached for his hat, saddled his horse, and rode off.

# V

WHEN Prince Total came running across the sand-pit all the groups dissolved and came together in a mass.

Hitch Diamond mounted the pine stump and proclaimed:

"Marse Tom say dat all of 'em is either Lootruns, Callicks, or Piscolopeyams!"

This astounding information was received with intense silence. Then an awed

voice exclaimed: "Dat sound like some kind of patent med'cine to me!"

This remark gave Rev. Vinegar Atts his cue.

"Brudders!" he bawled. "Marse Tom Gaitskill is done played a prank on us! Dar ain't no such religiums as whut he say!"

"Whut you know 'bout it?" Hitch demanded in belligerent tones.

"It's my bizness to know!" Vinegar Atts howled. "Dar ain't but fo' kinds of religion in de whole yearth—Damyanks, Johnnyrebs, Mefdis, an' Baptis!"

Hitch Diamond drew nearer to the bel-lowing preacher, both his big fists aching for a chance to hit.

"Whut you mean by 'sputin' Marse Tom's word, nigger?" he demanded.

"Aw, shut up, you bonehead prize-foughter!" Vinegar Atts whooped.

Hitch Diamond made a rush like a bear and struck out with all his strength.

By the mercy of Heaven Vinegar Atts ducked and avoided that terrible right. Then he started on a swift lope around the pine stump with Hitch Diamond in hot pursuit.

"Stan' up to him, Vinegar!" the crowd shrieked.

But Vinegar knew that each of Hitch Diamond's fists contained a punch like the kick of a forty-horse-power mule. He did not abate his headlong flight, but chased his shadow ten times around that stump, with Hitch drawing ever closer, for Hitch had the better wind. Then in desperation Vinegar stooped, snatched up a handful of sand and gravel, and hurled it into the face of his pursuer.

"Hey, dar!" Prince Total howled as Hitch stopped, blinded by the sand, and clawed at the dirt in his eyes. "Dat ain't no fair, revun!"

Then Prince, illogically, hurled a handful of gravel into the face of Vinegar Atts.

It was the signal for international war!

There was a moment of intense silence—the silence which we are told always precedes a storm. Every adult negro thought of two things: the sand-battles of his youth, and the fact that the ammunition of war lay inexhaustible at his feet in a mass one thousand feet deep.

Then five hundred men stooped to the ground, their hands scooped like shovels, and the silence was broken by a war-whoop which roused the white inhabitants

of Tickfall from their Sabbath siestas and sent the little children scampering from their play in the yards to the protection of their mothers.

Like water running through a funnel, the men in the natural basin of the sand-pit converged at the stump in the center. Around that point a whirling, shrieking, cursing mob hurled handfuls of sand and gravel and grit into every face they saw and received a full measure of the same material in their own.

Looking down into that maelstrom of struggle and conflict, nothing could be seen except the flying sand and dust which obscured the warriors like a cloud and gave the impression that a cyclone had rolled down there and could not get out.

Appalled by the fury of the fray, the countless hound dogs furred their tails, reefed their ears, and scudded away from the zone of peril.

The little negro boys who had united their fortunes with France and Jack Johnson stood their ground, their eyes filled with wonder and awe. Then they perceived that this was a sand-battle, a supreme joy to the heart of youth, and with wild shrieks of delight they circled around and added their active bodies and their busy hands to the fracas, laughing like maniacs, dancing like demons, shrieking like furies—the only group which did not disintegrate, but operated *en masse* against the others.

War makes strange alliances. As Hitch Diamond, prize-fighter, and Vinegar Atts, preacher, had started the ruction, so they became the center of its assault. From veritable necessity they stood shoulder to shoulder, their backs to the pine stump, fighting that howling ring of men. Stooping for gravel, rising to throw it—stooping and rising, stooping and rising—praying for brickbats, blinded by the dust, their lungs panting for air, their throats dust-choked, the blood pounding in their temples like a hundred war-drums, their faces pitted like smallpox and bleeding from the puncture of countless bits of gravel, streaming with sweat and smeared with blood—

"My Gawd!" Hitch Diamond bawled. "Gimme air!"

"Lawdamussy!" Vinegar Atts howled.

"Lemme outen dis!"

Then both of them turned around, scrambled up on top of the stump like

two bears, and stood tightly hugged in each other's arms.

After a moment they clawed the dirt out of their eyes. And then they saw something which sent their voices forth in a duet of appeal. With arms outstretched in prayer, as toward an altar of salvation, the prize-fighter and the preacher chanted:

"Oh, Marse Tom, fer Gawd's sake come down here an' he'p us!"

The effect of this was like the bugle call, Cease Firing! Five hundred negroes dropped their hands, straightened their backs, and looked where Vinegar and Hitch were pointing.

They saw something not soon to be forgotten.

In the annals of Kentucky, during the Mexican War, it is recorded that a Breckinridge, a Goodloe, and a Gaitskill, mounted on thoroughbred horses, rode into the City of Mexico under a flag of truce for a conference with Santa Anna. The guards standing at the gate of the city gazed in awe upon those magnificent figures and their splendid horses and exclaimed: "Holy Mother! The Americans are not men, but gods!"

On the edge of the sand-pit, seventy years later, these negroes saw another Gaitskill, grandson of the godlike youth who had startled the Mexican guards so long ago—erect, soldierly, his hair and beard as white as snow, his fine face turned toward them with an expression serene, powerful. The horse he sat glowed like black, polished marble, and with head erect, stood as motionless as a statue, with the hands of his rider resting upon his neck.

"Oh, Marse Tom!" a wild chorus whooped, "come down here an' he'p us!"

Then Gaitskill did a superb thing.

Reaching out with his gauntleted hand, he slapped his horse directly between the ears, at the same moment pricking him with the spur. The beautiful animal, standing on the very edge of the pit, reared straight up, his front feet pawing the air, looking to the men below as if he were about to leap down among them. Then, in response to his master's touch on his neck, the horse wheeled galloped easily around the pit to the entrance, and stopped in the midst of the dust-covered African warriors.

"Bat-tal-ion — atten-tion!" Colonel Gaitskill whooped, almost bursting with

laughter. "Dis-perse! Dis-band! De-part! Avaunt!"

Not a negro moved. Marse Tom wasn't speaking their language. That was some kind of strange talk.

"Hey, you niggers!" Gaitskill bawled. "Git out o' this sand-pit!"

If you have ever seen a half-grown, liver-colored hound pup, wagging a foolishly friendly tail, walk up to the sputtering fuse of a Fourth-of-July cannon-cracker and investigate the phenomenon with a watery blue eye, an amiable nose, and an inquiring mind; and then, when the explosion occurs, have seen his sudden loss of interest in scientific research and his expeditious departure from the vicinity of his explorations while he exhausts the treasures of his throat to vocalize his surprise and fear—you have a conception of the instantaneous response of the Tickfall army to this last command.

They swept over the sides of that basin as black spume lashes the shore of the sea and were gone.

## VI

GAITSKILL lingered a moment, gazing at the scarred and broken battle-ground, scratched clean of dust and sand, marked with the fingers of the contending host as

if ten thousand hungry chickens had been clawing there for food.

He was fortunate above all other men, for he had witnessed this historic battle from the moment Vinegar Atts had started his race around the stump.

Riding slowly homeward across the field, Hitch Diamond and Vinegar Atts emerged from a clump of underbrush and intercepted him.

"Marse Tom," Hitch said shamefacedly, "thank 'e, suh, fer intervenin'!"

"Me, too," Vinegar Atts chimed in.

Gaitskill had laughed until it was positively painful to grin, but the sight of these two stricken soldiers, with the ravages of war still upon them, their garments in rags, their bodies wounded and suffering, started him again.

"No use cacklin', Marse Tom," they said earnestly. "We means it."

"What side did you represent in the battle, Hitch?" Gaitskill laughed.

"I reckon I muss took sides wid dat Kusser, Marse Tom," Hitch said. "Dey all jumped on me at de same time."

"What side did you represent, Vinegar?" Gaitskill inquired next.

"I rep'sented de devil, Marse Tom. Dem niggers shore did whup me around dat stump!"

## THE MOTHER

DEAR little son, man potential, where are you going?

I breathed of myself on the spark God gave to your making:

Thus is a woman creative, and you in the taking

Have in your small hands a miracle worth the bestowing.

Hold the torch high, child of mine, for so few find the pathway,

Let the light blaze that I kindled in pain and in gladness;

Set your feet firmly, aware of the world's sin and sadness;

So you must fare forth alone and your mother will pray.

Man in your power, where is the child of my bearing?

Fine is your life as the oak that stands stanch in its glory;

Tender your heart as the leaves of the spring's early story,

Splendid your deeds for humanity's sake, never sparing;

Great is your name and the love which you give to another

Sacred to me, for I yield her the strength of your arm,

Trusting the world who has need of you keep you from harm.

Thus is a woman triumphant. I am your mother.

*Edith Livingston Smith*



# EUROPE'S MIGHTY FORTIFICATIONS



by George F. Brett



SEBASTIAN LE PRESTRE DE VAUBAN, a French engineer who lived in the seventeenth century, conducted fifty-three sieges and never lost one. He is the father of the science of permanent fortifications. Europe, in the present conflict, bristles like an angry hedgehog with the vast defensive works which he originated. What discoveries Vauban failed to make were achieved by another Frenchman who happened to be born on the Belgian side of the frontier—Alexis Henri Brialmont. The two men are the Alpha and well-nigh the Omega of modern military engineering. Their joint work, Brialmont's superimposed upon that of Vauban, is being subjected to the severest test that ever was applied to the material devices of man.

The battering of the most formidable artillery in the world upon fortified places on either side of far-stretching frontiers is giving rise to a question of vital importance to statesmen and generals. That question might be put thus: "Has the science of projectiles and of artillery construction outstripped the skill of the builder of fortifications?"

In other words, have the size, the mobility, and the penetrative force of the latest and greatest guns made useless the

vast works of defense constructed all over the civilized world at an expense which has kept nations sweating to pay the cost?

The data furnished by the present hostilities, as far as they have progressed, are inconclusive as an answer to this question. It is true that Namur, the work of Brialmont, and one of the strongest fortifications in Europe, succumbed, after two days' bombardment, to the gigantic motor-borne howitzers of Von Kluck's army. It is also true, however, that Liège, likewise fortified by Brialmont, was maintaining an effective resistance in some of its outlying forts as late as the end of August. Lille, strongly fortified, was surrendered without a blow. Verdun, pounded by the flower of the German army under Crown Prince Frederick William, showed no signs of yielding at any stage of the attack, and survived in effective condition to hearten the Allies during the retreat of the Germans under the terrific onslaught of the Franco-British forces.

Neither have previous wars, approximating the offensive power of armies as constituted to-day, cast any deciding light upon the question. In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 Metz and Sedan fell after a faint semblance of defense, while Belfort held off the Germans for three months and a half, and finally the garrison





THE FROWNING BATTLEMENTS WHICH PARIS HAS BEEN BUILDING SINCE THE DISASTER OF 1870 TO GUARD AGAINST A REPETITION OF THE DRAMATIC SEIZURE BY THE GERMANS. THE FRENCH CAPITAL IS THE MOST STRONGLY FORTIFIED CITY IN THE WORLD. DURING THE DAYS WHEN VON KLUCK'S RIGHT WING HAD SWEEPED DOWN TO WITHIN THIRTY MILES OF PARIS, AT THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER, THE FRENCH MILITARY AUTHORITIES RAZED MANY STRUCTURES TO THE NORTH AND NORTHEAST OF THE CAPITAL IN ORDER TO GIVE FREE PLAY TO THE GUNS OF THE FORTS



A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE VAST SYSTEMS OF FORTIFICATIONS THAT BRISTLE ALL OVER THE FACE—TWO FRONTIERS THAT SEPARATE THREE CIVILIZATIONS—THE FRENCH, THE GERMAN, AND—TIVITY IN MILITARY ENGINEERING FOR THE PAST FORTY YEARS, IN ANTICIPA—



—OF EUROPE. IT WILL BE SEEN THAT THE PRINCIPAL LINES OF DEFENSES FOLLOW ROUGHLY THE  
 —THE RUSSIAN. THE FRANCO-GERMAN FRONTIER HAS BEEN THE POINT OF GREATEST AC-  
 —TION OF THE DEATH-GRIP IN WHICH EUROPE FINDS ITSELF AT THIS MOMENT



A TYPICAL MEANS OF DEFENSE APPLIED BY THE BRITISH WAR OFFICE IN THE GIRDLE OF COAST FORTIFICATIONS THAT ENCIRCLE THE BRITISH ISLES LIKE A RING OF STEEL. PORTSMOUTH, WITH THE ISLE OF WIGHT, GUARDS SOUTHAMPTON, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL PORTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE BRISTLING WORKS ABOUT SPITHEAD AND YARMOUTH ARE OF SUFFICIENT DEFENSIVE POWER TO GIVE A DEADLY TUSSELE TO ANY NAVAL FORCE WHICH CAN BE BROUGHT TO BEAR AGAINST THEM, AND PROBABLY TO REPEL IT

yielded only with full honors of war. None of these operations furnished any important chapter to the science of fortification.

The next great siege in chronological order was the siege of Plevna by the Russians in 1877, which lasted almost six months. Plevna, however, was not defended by permanent works, carefully planned and expensively executed, but rather by a series of field fortifications hastily thrown up by Osman Pasha—whom the Sultan honored with the title of *Ghazi*, the Victorious. On the other hand, Silistria, on the Danube, which was strongly fortified, fell easily into the hands of the invaders.

After that the next great test applied to the resisting power of fortifications was furnished by the operations of the Russo-Japanese War. Port Arthur, which the Russians had been fortifying for ten years

in anticipation of the attack which the Japanese directed against it, was the main objective of the Japanese forces. The place was strongly garrisoned, well supplied, and prepared for a resistance of two years. The Japanese, under Field-Marshal Oyama, had a comparatively easy time of the reduction of Port Arthur. When the place surrendered, on January 3, 1905, it appeared that the surrender was premature, and Lieutenant-General Stoessel, its defender, was court-martialed for having given up to the enemy a stronghold which might have been held for months longer.

After Port Arthur came Adrianople. That fortress, designed by Von der Goltz Pasha, the present commander of the German operations in Belgium, and partly constructed under his supervision, held out for seven months, first against the impetuous bayonet attacks and then against the siege operations of the Bulgarian army.



The long resistance of Adrianople would seem, viewed superficially, to argue for the effectiveness of fortifications under the fire of modern artillery. It must be remembered, however, that the siege-guns employed by the Bulgarians were not of the latest type, and that the invaders of Turkey owed their victories very largely to the irresistible patriotic impulse of their assaults.

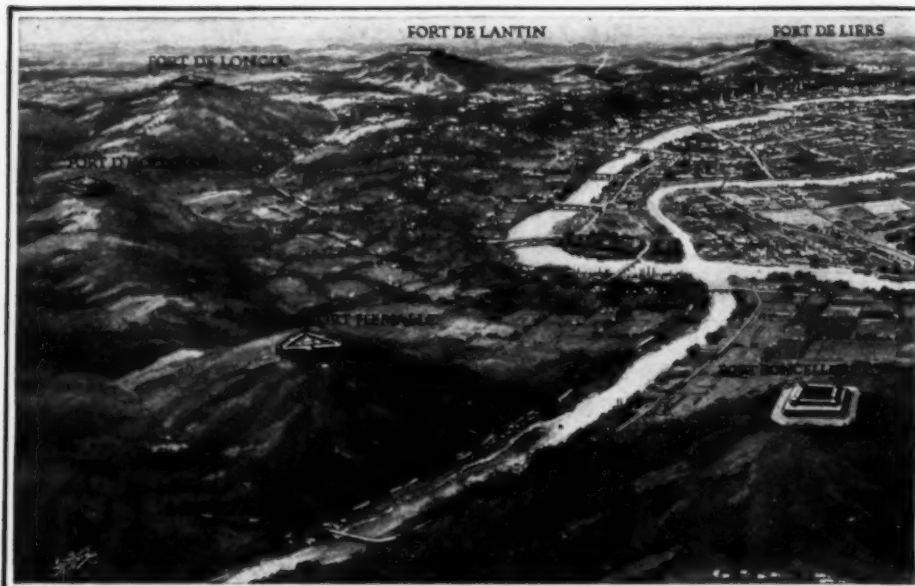
Something of the discrepancy between the resisting power of fortifications and the deadly destructiveness of the most effective modern heavy artillery is seen in the comparative ease with which the Germans, in the first phase of the present world conflict, made their way through Belgium and the northwestern theater of operations in France.

For the purposes of their initial ad-



THE FROWNING WORKS OF STRASSBURG, WHICH THE PRUSSAINS WRESTED FROM FRANCE IN 1870 AFTER A MEMORABLE DEFENSE, AND WHICH GERMANY HAS BEEN FORTIFYING WITH ENERGY AND AT ENORMOUS EXPENSE AGAINST THE ATTEMPT OF THE FRENCH TO RECOVER IT NOW BEING MADE WITH THE AID OF GREAT BRITAIN AND RUSSIA





THE FORTIFICATIONS OF LIÈGE, WHICH BY THEIR POWER OF RESISTANCE ADMINISTERED A DISASTROUS DELAY TO THE GERMAN INVASION OF THE FRENCH FRONTIER. LIÈGE WAS FORTIFIED BY BRIALMONT, THE GREAT BELGIAN ENGINEER. IT IS PREDICTED BY SOME MILITARY OBSERVERS THAT THE DELAY OF THE GER-

vance into France across Belgian soil the Germans carried, with the help of motor-tractors, heavier howitzers than any that

had previously been employed by a mobile force. The enormous weight of these impedimenta, it was believed by some ob-



NAMUR AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS, ALSO THE WORK OF BRIALMONT. NAMUR, THOUGH ONE OF THE MOST HEAVILY FORTIFIED PLACES IN THE WORLD, WAS SLAUGHTERED WITH HOWITZERS OF GREATER BATTERING POWER THAN ANY MOBILE ARTILLERY—THE FAILURE OF THE BELGIAN RESISTANCE AT NAMUR IS AN ARGUMENT AGAINST THE



- TROUS CHECK TO THE GERMANS IN THEIR FIRST INCURSION INTO BELGIUM ON THEIR WAY TO
- NEER WHO ALSO BUILT THE DEFENSIVE WORKS ON THE ROAD FROM RUSSIA TO BUKHAREST.
- MAN ADVANCES AT LIÈGE WILL PROVE THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN THE WAR

servers, was a material contribution to the difficulties of the German retreat across the Marne.

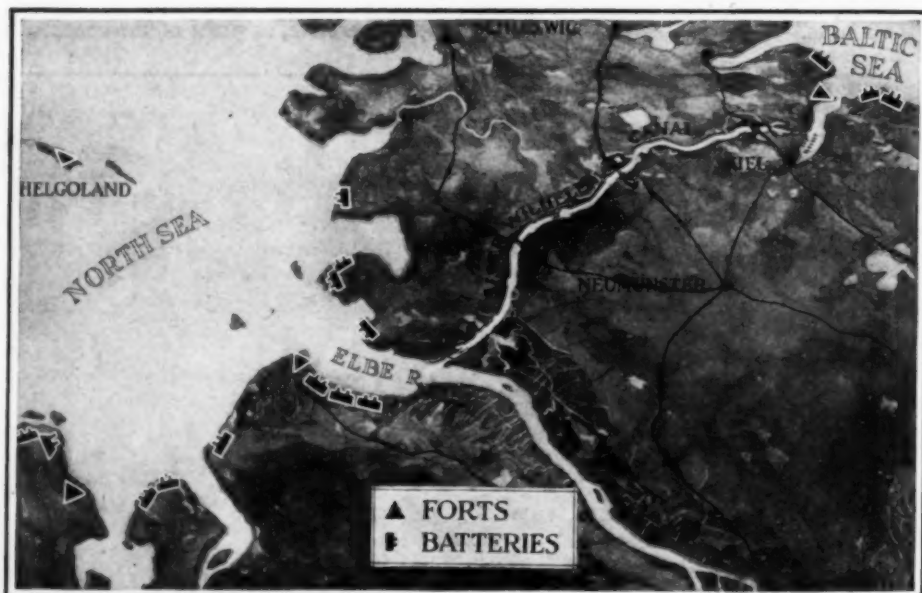
The operations at that line of contact between the warring nations might well be cited, therefore, as proof of the contention



- MOST STRONGLY FORTIFIED PLACES IN EUROPE, FELL IN TWO DAYS BEFORE THE GERMAN ON-
- EVER BEFORE EMPLOYED IN WAR. IN THE OPINION OF THE OPPONENTS OF PERMANENT WORKS,
- EFFICIENCY OF PERMANENT WORKS FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS



PETROGRAD (FORMERLY ST. PETERSBURG) AND ITS DEFENSES, CHIEFLY ON THE COAST SIDE. KRONSTADT IS THE CENTER OF THE FORTIFICATIONS OF THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL, AND THE PRINCIPAL FORT ON THE ISLAND OF KRONSTADT—FORT PETROPAVLOVSK—IS FLANKED ON EITHER SIDE BY A SERIES OF FORTRESSES AND BATTERIES WHICH COMPLETELY COMMAND THE ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOR



THE KIEL (KAISER WILHELM) CANAL AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS. THE CANAL, WHICH CONNECTS THE MOUTH OF THE ELBE RIVER WITH THE BALTIC SEA AT KIEL, RUNS THROUGH SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN. BY THIS WATERWAY, STRONGLY GUARDED BY ELABORATE DEFENSIVE WORKS, GERMANY CAN TRANSFER HER FLEET FROM THE BALTIC TO THE NORTH SEA WITH GREAT RAPIDITY. THIS STRATEGIC WAY IS STRONGLY GUARDED BY FORMIDABLE WORKS AT BOTH ENDS AND BY THE BATTERIES OF HELGOLAND

that modern artillery, in the development of its offensive possibilities, has outstripped the progress achieved in defensive engineering, great as that has been.

But in no case is the result to be regarded as even approaching final conclusions of definite value to defenders of countries. Until such final conclusions have been reached by the inexorable logic of battles won and lost, the vast systems of fortifications which furrow the map of Europe will continue to furnish the basis for the calculations of statesmen.

### THREE LINES OF FORTS

Roughly speaking, Europe is divided into three parts by two distinct systems of opposing fortifications, marking the lines of contact between three rival races. These fortifications follow the strategic requirements of two frontiers—the Franco-German and the Russo-German. In some instances the discrepancies between geographical frontiers and military exigencies are so wide that fortified places stand many miles back of the political boundaries. In general, however, the fortresses of Europe stand in approximate alinement with the frontiers.

In addition to these three main divisions of the strongholds of Europe are the elaborate defensive works built through the centuries to protect capitals from invasion, and the vast fortresses constructed by small nations, either to enforce the neutrality of their respective territories or to repel invasion by powerful neighbors.

It is a notable fact, for instance, that some of the smallest countries on the European continent have expended relatively the greatest amounts on defensive enterprises of formidable scope. In the two countries that stand out most conspicuously in this respect Brialmont was the engineer and builder. It was Brialmont who designed and constructed the fortifications of Antwerp, Liège, and Namur in Belgium. Brialmont was the author, also, of the fortifications of Roumania, designed for protection against invasion from Russia.

The calculations of the past have been justified in the case of Belgium, which has based part of its defensive preparations upon the prospect of a German invasion. In Roumania the fears of the military engineers have so far been proved unfounded by the events of history, for Roumania has

never been in conflict with Russia. By an odd irony of fate, however, Roumanian strategy has not anticipated the situation of to-day, wherein an invasion is possible from the Austrian side as a result of Roumania's likely intervention in the Russian operations against Austria.

Belgium is the most strongly fortified country for its size in the world. The little monarchy has been the battle-ground of western Europe since Caesar's day. Armies have trodden down its soil with iron heels. German hosts have grappled with French; Anglo-Saxons have striven with Gauls; the Belgians themselves, half French and half Teutons, have struggled with their neighbors, the Dutch, for liberty.

There is hardly a square mile of territory in this cockpit that has not drunk the blood of contending forces. The names of Jemappes, Tournai, Fontenoy, Ramillies, Quatrebras, Charleroi, Namur, Ligny ring down through the years like trumpet blasts in the world's symphony of strife. Waterloo decided that Europe should not be French; Liège may yet decide that it shall not be German.

It is the logic of history that imposed upon Belgium the duty of establishing and maintaining formidable defensive works. The fortifications of Liège, of Antwerp, of Namur are among the latest and the best products of engineering skill—all built in the hope of checking incursions, either from France or from Germany, in some later repetition of the historic conflict between those two countries. How well the events of to-day have justified these preparations is apparent to every newspaper reader.

Of the capitals, Paris is the most strongly fortified in the world. This condition is the result, to some extent, of the disaster of 1870, when Prussia, after crushing the French armies in the field, overcame the last resistance of the third empire in its ultimate citadel.

### UNDER THE SHADOW OF 1870

All the military measures undertaken by France since 1871, and a great part of those applied in Germany, are the outcome of the war of 1870—on the one hand under the stress of a passionate desire for revenge, and on the other under the necessity of maintaining the existing territorial division. The constant and comprehensive



military preparations in France have been directed, first at blocking a repetition of the Prussian invasion by a bulwark of strongholds running all along the Franco-German frontier, and second at enabling Paris to withstand a long siege successfully in the event of the breakdown of these distant defenses. Thus we find the four vast forts, with their surrounding fortresses, strung out in almost a straight line—Belfort, Epinal, Toul, and Verdun. These are, in effect, the outlying defenses of the French capital, its first line of fortifications. There are additional works of magnitude on the Belgian frontier.

Unlike Paris, Berlin is comparatively defenseless, in so far as any immediate fortifications are concerned. The fortress of Spandau is a semimedieval, semimodern work of which little is known outside of the intelligence departments of armies. The gray walls of this stronghold shelter the Julius tower, that dungeoned safe-deposit vault where the Kaiser has kept the millions that France paid for her freedom in 1871. This is the famous German war fund, all in yellow napoleons and gulden, which some persons have been disposed to set down as a myth, but which appears to be a fact.

Spandau undoubtedly could give a good account of itself in the event of an attack upon Berlin, but the German staff counts upon checking the enemy long before his cavalry appears in the suburbs of the capital. The real fortifications of Berlin are on the French and the Russian frontiers.

#### VIENNA, CITY OF BATTLES

Vienna is a name that recalls sieges and battles and the din of races in a death-grip. German and Hun and Pole and Turk have fought beneath its walls; it was here that the gallant Sobieski, with his Polish Uhlans—the originals of the present German cavalry—smashed the power of Kara Mustapha in 1683 and saved drowning Europe from the final sweep of the Moslem wave. It is a city of bloody memories and romantic struggles on the highway from the west to the east. And yet Vienna is fortified only with pick and shovel; its walls lie far to the east and the south—at Cracow, at Przemysl, at Sarajevo, Trieste, Pola, and Cattaro.

St. Petersburg—now renamed Petrograd in an effort to banish the memories

of the German civilization which gave Peter the Great to Russia and established the Slav "window into Europe" over the marshes of the Neva—is girdled by a ring of steel and concrete set across the entrance to the Morskoi Canal, the sea-road to the Muscovite capital. At the gateway to the harbor frowns the fortress of Petropavlovsk—Saints Peter and Paul—whose dripping casements have stifled the cry of many a revolutionist. The guns of Petropavlovsk sweep the entrance to the gulf; on either side of the battlements of this main stronghold frown a line of fortresses and marine batteries, each fully manned night and day, keeping ceaseless vigil.

#### BELGIAN FRONTIER FORTIFIED

France has affected to regard the inviolability of the territory of Belgium as a sufficient barrier to a German invasion through Belgium. In practise, however, the French general staff has treated the treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of the little monarchy as a practically negligible quantity, and has carried out a scheme of fortifications along the Belgian border in the expectation that Germany would step over Belgium to attack France in the northeastern region. The attention which the French have paid to the development of the fortifications of Dunkirk, Lille, Civet, and Mezières, strung out in a line along the Belgian border, is conclusive evidence of this provision.

On the German side of the French frontier no lack of preparations can be laid at the doors of the German strategists. Opposing Toul and Verdun are the great defensive works of Metz and Diedenhofen as a primary base in the event of an advance or a first line of defense in case of a retreat. Back of these two strongholds is a chain of forts strung along the valley of the Rhine.

These defenses, kept up and improved at great expense for the past forty years, are Strassburg, Gernersheim, Mainz, Coblenz, and Cologne. The resisting capacity of these places is so great that an invasion of Germany by the Allies on the western front that is not predicated upon the reduction or the investment of at least Metz, Diedenhofen, Strassburg, and preferably Gernersheim, is destined to end not only in failure, but in a probable disaster for the invaders.



No account of the fortifications of Germany would be complete without mention of the low-lying island of Helgoland, which barely tops the surface of the North Sea a few miles from the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser. Helgoland was a British possession until the year 1890, when it fell into the hands of the Germans by one of those characteristic little diplomatic dickers with which the Kaiser has accomplished impressive results from time to time.

The price which Germany paid for the island of Helgoland was her renunciation of her "claim" in Zanzibar under the tripartite agreement which enabled Great Britain to establish a protectorate over the African island.

In 1890 the Berlin foreign office approached Downing Street with a proposition that Great Britain cede Helgoland to Germany in exchange for Germany's Zanzibar "claim." Lord Salisbury considered the little dot on the North Sea of so little importance that he launched a sarcastic gibe or two at the members of Parliament who were opposed to the exchange offered by Berlin.

#### HELGOLAND STRONGLY FORTIFIED

The German proposal went through without a hitch, and the importance of Helgoland became evident only when the British admiralty discovered that Germany lost no time in starting an elaborate system of fortifications on the island, including a fortified harbor containing accommodations for a large number of submarines and other small craft. To-day the island which Germany obtained in return for a "claim" is a bristling center of land and sea defenses and a base for submarine raids that may prove of disastrous significance to Great Britain before the war is over.

In addition, Helgoland is being used as the base for a considerable number of airships of the Zeppelin type, with which the Germans have kept the British scout cruisers in a state of redoubled watchfulness.

Helgoland, in addition, is the German Gibraltar, serving as a formidable defense to the mouth of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, which, through the mouth of the Elbe, connects the Baltic with the North Sea.

On the Russo-German frontier two parallel lines of fortifications glare at one

another, charged with death-dealing power, all along the artificial frontier which Russia, Germany, and Austria, then making common cause for the spoliation of Poland, created by the last phase of the dismemberment of that brave but unhappy country in 1795. On the German side are the bristling battlements of Königsberg, Danzig, Thorn, and Posen, the ancient Posnan of the Polish kingdom. In a general way these works are designed to re-enforce the natural defensive features offered by the valley of the Vistula River.

#### GERMANIC LINES JOINED

Where the German fortifications cease the common system of Germanic defense against Slavic invasion is taken up by Austria with the fortified cities of Cracow and Przemyśl, which have played so important a part in the present Russian operations against Austria. These two points are the outposts, so to speak, of the towering Carpathian Mountains, the geographical defenses of Austria at this point of its frontiers.

To these defensive works on the German and Austrian side Russia has opposed a vast system of fortifications, laid out in the course of the centuries, in a long, bulging line from Kovno, in the north, to Kamenetz, in the south. Warsaw, the former capital of free Poland, is the key to the series of Russian defenses—Warsaw, bitterly contested for centuries in the never-ending conflict between the Slav and his numerous enemies, the Tatar, the Gaul, the German, and the Slav himself.

The coast line of the British Isles fairly bristles with military works of various kinds, designed to prevent the only sort of invasion possible in that part of Europe—an invasion by sea. In that respect the defenses of Britain resemble closely those of the United States, which does not possess a single comprehensive structure for permanent defense at an inland point, but has confined its fortification works to structures designed to repel attacks by fleets.

The seaward defenses of Great Britain, however, are formidable. A girdle of concealed batteries, armed with the highest-powered guns yet devised, encircles the tight little isle and its restless islet across the Irish Sea. These batteries are designed, of course, to cooperate with the fleet in the event of the employment of

England's naval power to protect her shores. Naturally the mouth of the Thames, as the gateway to London, is well-guarded by permanent artillery, extending in a frowning barrier from Dover to Harwich.

#### GREAT CHANGE IN ARMAMENT

The locations of these citadels of the nations stand practically unchanged through the ages. The topographical and geographical conditions which governed the choice of their sites remain to-day as they were at the first birthday of history; but the construction and equipment, like the political conditions, have changed so materially that the armaments of modern Europe bear no resemblance to their original prototypes.

Various types of guns are employed in these fortresses. The governments of most of the European powers have developed weapons of their own or have modified, borrowed, or stolen foreign models to suit their peculiar purposes. The industry of espionage, developed to a high degree of hardihood and skill in the endeavor of each government to keep track of the inventions of its rivals, has been a recognized and expensive part of the international machinery of administration for many years past. Whatever defensive secrets spies have failed to steal, or traitors have been prevented from selling, are now becoming the common property of war offices by the interchange of hostile visits going on along the Franco-German and the Russo-German border-lands.

#### THE SPHERICAL MORTAR

One of the recognized types of fortress guns is the Gruson spherical mortar, a bulldog-muzzled weapon which revolves within a steel chamber. The mechanism is so arranged that the muzzle can be moved around an encircling metal collar to any desired angle without leaving an open space, thus insuring the complete safety of the gunners below.

Then there is a revolving cupola, into which is placed a howitzer shielded by a heavy plate of nickel-steel. The weapon can be readily adjusted to any angle of fire by the gunner within the chamber, and the caliber of the gun is generally 4.7 inches.

The disappearing gun-carriage as a feature of defensive armament is an American

invention, devised by Generals William Crozier and Adelbert R. Buffington, and its construction is a carefully guarded secret of the United States government. Great Britain has a disappearing gun of a different type. Most of the continental European powers have applied the principle of disappearance to fort artillery by means of the steel cupola, or turret, which rises above the parapet and after firing sinks back to the original level with the aid of the recoil.

One of the incidental phases of the cupola as applied to land fortification is the portable cupola, equipped with a gun of caliber as large as 5.7 centimeters. This device can be transported to the required position, slid off its carriage to a platform, and employed as a permanent gun might be.

The principle of the disappearing cupola is also applied to search-lights of vast candle-power, which can be turned on the enemy and thus expose him to the deadly activities of the gunners.

The destructive power of some of these guns is so great as to lend the color of probability to the prediction that war is bound to come to an end through its own unmeasured violence. One gun used by the British coast defense, twelve-inch caliber, penetrates nine inches of steel at a distance of seven miles. Another weapon, employed in the fortifications of Metz and Strassburg, hurls a projectile weighing 760 pounds at a muzzle energy of 42,000 foot tons and can pierce a steel plate 8.5 inches thick at a distance of more than seven miles.

#### AMERICA'S GIANT GUNS

The frightful destructiveness of these mechanisms of annihilation, however, only remotely approaches the deadly might of the biggest type of American fortification gun, 16-inch caliber, which plunges a mass of steel weighing 2,400 pounds a distance of eleven miles. This gigantic engine can send a shell plowing through thirty feet of concrete reenforced with steel plates and tear into the enemy's ship with force enough to send the most heavily armored dreadnaught to the bottom in a trice.

The aeroplanes or airships, for scouting purposes, are among the latest implements of defense.

In addition to the newest appalling contrivances of devastation are some of the

old accepted methods of defensive warfare which date back to the beginnings of military science in the early days. Among these is the practise of mining and countermining. The sinister advance in the science of explosives has added greatly to the deadly possibilities of this phase of military operations. By combining electricity with explosives it is possible to mine large areas of the enemy's region of approach, lay enormous charges of high explosives, and by means of the electric spark cause an upheaval that can tear a battalion to bits.

Electricity is employed in another way, only a little less deadly, as the Russians found out when they began the invasion of East Prussia in the opening weeks of the war. All nations have become thoroughly accustomed to barbed-wire obstacles in defensive works. These fences, bristling with sharp points, are laid several deep, line after line, in a crisscross tangle. Ways have been found of overcoming such barriers. One of them is the old method suggested by grandmother's scissors.

It remained for the Germans, however, to turn these barbed-wire entanglements into deadly engines charged with electricity of so high a voltage that contact means instant destruction to life.

These electrified entanglements are of

great value to the defense in the last advance upon fortresses.

#### DECISIVE TEST TO COME

Such are some of the structures and implements in the giant system of defensive works that have been built by the European nations at enormous expenditure and by the employment of the highest engineering skill obtainable. The frequent predictions in the past few years that science would soon devise new forces of destruction which would render mountains of concrete and steel plates as yielding as a child's sand-pile, have not been justified by the operations of the War of the Nations. Neither has it been shown that fortifications can hold back great armies very long. The final test between the forces of defense and of offense, it is quite evident, is yet to come.

If this test should result in the consignment of Europe's vast defensive works to the scrap-heap, then military science would revert in one respect to its beginnings, when warriors, unprotected by any defenses, faced each other in conflict breast to breast. The frequent employment of the bayonet charge in the present struggle would seem to indicate that the method of primeval man-to-man force is by no means a discarded element in warfare.

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#### THE AUTUMN

GLAD Autumn sings upon the hills,  
Where leaves are lying sere;  
With madcap joy its bosom thrills,  
And all the sweet, crisp air it fills  
With joyous laughter clear.

Across the dry bed of the stream,  
And up the mountain's side,  
Where mellow rays of sunlight gleam,  
It sets each fading flower adream  
Of bygone Summer pride.

Far, far away the purpling sky  
Fades into snowy white,  
Yet Autumn's last caresses lie  
On Summer's pyre, now brown and dry,  
Whose long-flashed flames were bright.

*Lurana Sheldon*

# MEN I HAVE LOVED



AM not a Cleopatra or modern Venus, but only a thoroughly alive, normally attractive young woman, a typical product of my day and generation. I am inclined to be egotistical, otherwise I should not be writing this, and I admit I find myself a most engrossing subject for contemplation. I differ from my kind only in this one particular, that on this occasion I am going to be absolutely frank, or at least I think I am.

Now all men are expected to have loved many times, or several times. I do not mean—I hasten to say it—any reference to the much-discussed subject of double-standard morality; let those of more somber minds and graver thoughts attend to that. I speak of love as it is permitted in our drawing-rooms and summer-houses, of love that makes all the world love a lover, of love of lyric poetry and romantic novel, of “As You Like It” or “Peg o’ My Heart,” not of “Camille” or “Sappho.” And, after all, the drawing-room love is far more important than that of the storm-swept mountain or passion-torn valley, for out of it come our happy marriages, and—oh, well, let us not go into the question of eugenics. What I have been trying to say is simply that, though I have had many love-affairs in my twenty-seven years, there has never been anything in any of them to arouse the ire of Anthony Comstock.

But to go back, all men are expected to have loved more than once, and no wise woman aspires to be a man’s first love. But there seems to be a prevalent sentiment that a woman should be more specific, more concentrated in the distribution of her affections, that she should love but one man at one time and him forever. Otherwise she is labeled a flirt and a coquette, an unreliable and inconstant creature, fickle, changeable, capricious, vacillating, a sad survival of her irreproachable colonial grandmother. But Galsworthy

writes his “Dark Flower”; surely woman has some rights, too.

In as definite and clear-cut division as Shakespeare’s seven ages I loved seven men in a definite and clear-cut way. The first was a bell-boy in a fashionable hotel in the Adirondacks. I was seventeen, he a college junior earning some extra money in the summer-time. I was passing through a period of juvenile socialism, of rebellion against caste. What an opportunity to show my democracy!

I burned with indignation at the snubs he received from the other girls; I distressed my mother by sitting on the bell-boys’ bench, waiting while he answered the hot and cold water calls; I forbade my father to tip him—that humiliation would have been too great for me; I danced with a heavy heart because he could only sit by and watch; I found a hundred points of superiority in him to the young men guests; I lived for the hour when he would be off duty, when we would seek some secluded corner to avoid all prying eyes; he was proud, and I adored him for it. My family left two weeks before they intended to and hurried me back to the city. I never saw my bell-boy again, but though the grief of my widowhood was short-lived, it was more poignant than I ever experienced afterward.

The following summer I met John. He was studying for the ministry, and I had passed in my enthusiasm from socialism to religion. We lived in churches; we spent long hours discussing the sermons; we saw great visions, we discovered new virtues in each other; I was almost submerged with my goodness. We believed marriages were made in heaven and our first kiss was sanctified. We neglected all our obligations and duties for a sublimely selfish planning of future altruism. Everything was symbolic to us, from the storm to the falling of a rose-petal.

I went to college that fall, and the separation, combined with a course in Biblical history, cured me. Had it not

been for this intervention of a kind Providence our enthusiasm might have carried us into marriage, and undoubtedly we would have been very unhappy on the rude discovery of our real selves. It grieved me that I could not make John understand my change of heart, but the shock of my revulsion of feeling was a salutary warning. I grew analytical.

#### THE LURE OF LONELINESS

My next affair, the only one I am a little ashamed of, grew not from a feeling of affection, but from the call of the chase. However, it was partly Herbert's fault. He was engaged unofficially to my friend, but being very attractive, big, and blond, with speaking eyes and deep-cut mouth whose crisscross lines hinted at manifold experiences, he could not resist the desire to test out his charms just once more.

It was summer, and Helen had left him—she was annoyingly sure of herself, and we had the cottage next to his. There were rocks to be sat upon where the dashing spray formed a silver fringe in the moonlight and where one could not be made comfortable without aid. He was lonely, and I, being of a sympathetic nature, was lonely, too—surely she ought not to have left him as though I were perfectly safe. Every woman likes to feel she is a bit of a vampire, and I thrilled under the sensation of playing a questionable but fascinating part in a drama. Then the play almost grew to reality, and what the end would have been I do not know, but I had an unexpected opportunity to go South, and I left him—for Helen.

This trip was noteworthy for the fact that, though I met all those charming, gallant Southerners I had heard so much about, I returned North without a single romance. Perhaps it was because I could not quite forget those evenings out on the rocks.

#### TWO AT A TIME

I made up for it later, nevertheless, by loving two men at the same time. It was the bitterest thing possible, for I could have been happy with either one of them if it had not been for the other, and I wanted them both so much. One was big and strong, quiet and intensive; it seemed as if he could crush me to atoms simply with his powerful hand. The other was small and lithe and prodigal, with a mind that

snapped; he was a constant source of irritation to me because he was cleverer than I.

I wanted to talk to him, or rather with him, by the hour, but when he left I always felt I had made a sorry showing. He was the kind of man it was a joy to sit opposite to in a restaurant at a little rose-lit table far enough away from the orchestra not to have the music intrusive; or to sit by the fireplace and pour tea for in thin Dresden cups and talk, talk, talk.

The other was a man it was happiness to tramp through the fields with, or be caught in a thunder-storm and seek some lonely barn where you could sit quite near his big, protecting presence and say absolutely nothing. I honestly loved them both all one winter; it was my first winter affair, and I was exhausted by spring. Then one of them left town, and the other—must I admit it—married a girl from Boston.

I have that scar yet. I went into business life to try to forget. Frequent attacks upon my affections had made them susceptible, I realized, but hours from nine to five rendered me ready for bed, so I had little time to think about myself, and even the most ardent worshippers of the small-winged god must admit that one of his arrows is imagination.

My sixth adventure began on a very platonic basis. Stephen was an inventor and very scientific. Now if there is anything I am not it is scientific. I loathe machinery and little wheels, I abhor dynamos, and motors have no charm for me—be it said to my credit, I never claimed they had. But I was what he needed—contrast to his work—and what interested me was that something based on a jumble of figures and molecules, voltages and reactions, was to be invented and laid at my feet, but later licked up, patented, and turned into real money. He needed me so badly to keep him human that I would have been a stone if I had not loved him a little, and he was such a helpless thing, my man-boy inventor. I was on the verge of buying a scientific library when I met Harold.

#### HER JIG-SAW PUZZLE

I can't say much about him because the affair is all of too recent date to be in proper perspective. I have told many men I could not understand them, it always flatters, but here was one to whom



in saying that I told the truth. He baffled me; I could fit nothing to him, he was a jig-saw puzzle which defied putting together.

He was, or rather is, very tall and thin and has eyes that rarely take the trouble to look at you. I think he is the most unenthusiastic man I ever knew; sometimes I suspect he is lazy, emotionally as well as physically indolent. He would rather sit and talk to you or let you talk at him than take the trouble to leave you. He loves the sea and the wild open country, but he spends all his time in the heart of the city. If you are a woman you can understand the fascination of probing around trying to find something from which you can strike a spark.

No wonder I forgot my inventor and

all the rest of them, almost all. Something tells me I will keep on hurling myself against this opaque wall until I am battered into a hopeless mass of spinsterhood, or until it yields, and if it yields one tiny little bit I think you will reckon with me, Mr. Harold, for these past weeks. Whatever the end may be, whether you are the man or there is yet to be another—I value all my experiences; I would not part with one.

Am I not educated thereby? Have I not that much more finesse in loving? Am I not that much more fitted to be all things to one husband? I have not been mutable or false; something beyond me, over which I had no control, stepped in each time to say "not this road." It makes life very hard, but very interesting.

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### THE LAWLESS HEART

DULL trade hath bound me in its grip,  
And never shall I be free,  
Yet I dream of the decks of a pirate ship  
In the roll of the open sea;  
I dream of the pennant dread and black  
That flies at the mast away,  
As we swoop along on a merchant's track  
In the sting of the flying spray!

Oh, I am a law-abiding chap,  
Yet deep in my heart I'd be  
A buccaneer with a scarlet cap  
And a Terror of the Sea;  
As lawless and ruthless a bandit brute  
As history ever knew,  
Roaming the seas in search of loot  
At the head of an evil crew!

Oh, here at home I am meek and mild,  
A man with a family,  
Yet I dream of deeds that are dark and wild  
And of red, red fights at sea;  
And under my breath I softly hum  
A stave from a pirate song,  
And my throat grows parched for pirate rum,  
For I have been dry so long!

My life is ordered and shaped and bound  
And kept to its rule and line,  
But my thoughts can wander the whole world round  
And my dreams—my dreams are mine!  
So the old tales hold me in their grip,  
And I hungrily long to be  
A pirate chief on a low, black ship  
In the roll of the open sea!

Berton Braley



#### HIS HOLINESS, THE NEW POPE. BENEDICT XV

Giacomo della Chiesa (to give him his secular name), elected on September 3 to succeed the late Pius X, is one of the youngest men to occupy the papal chair. He is not quite sixty years old, having been born of noble parentage, at Pegli, Italy, diocese of Genoa, November 21, 1854, and was created a cardinal as recently as May 25 of the present year. As Archbishop of Bologna he not long since expressed decided views against certain forms of modern dancing. It is suggested that possibly the new Pope's choice of a name was influenced by the fact that Benedict XIV (elected after many ballottings in 1740) was also Archbishop of Bologna.



# THE ADOPTED BABY

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER



SOMETIMES they could see him with his face pressed wistfully against the bars of the big iron gate, peering over at their small white cottage, and sometimes they saw him playing by himself on the big lawn, and he seemed a very lonely little boy. Each day they saw him seated beside the driver of the sturdy salmon-colored horses, going out with his mother to take the air, and each day as the phaeton turned into the road the little boy turned his face toward the small white cottage, as if hoping for a wave of the hand from Benjy or a nod of the head from Mr. Wentworth, but the two old men never waved or nodded. They did not like boys. Perhaps it would be more truthful to say they thought they did not like boys.

I wish you could see the great, cool, brick house set among the giant oaks, with the broad expanse of close-clipped green lawn and the shady summer-houses, and the fountain with goldfish in the basin, and the swing hung from one of the oaks, and the tricycle the boy owned, and the good gravel walks on which to ride it, and all the pleasant verdant copses in which a boy could play. And then, if you could see the little white cottage, sun-baked because trees would interfere with Benjy's garden, you would wonder why the boy looked longingly through the bars of the gate toward the white cottage.

For years the big house had been untenanted. Then came painters and carpenters and, finally, trunks and Mr. Rothcranz and Mrs. Rothcranz and—Edward!

"Them folks that took the big place has a boy," said Benjy sullenly to Mr. Wentworth. "Right here is where we're goin' to be bothered to tarnation!"

"Perhaps not," said Mr. Wentworth. "He has plenty of room at home. If he comes bothering we'll send him home."

"And we'll send him home a scootin'!" affirmed Benjy fiercely. "You leave it to me, and I'll send him home a skippin' and a scootin', and no mistake about it."

For a month or more than a month, however, Benjy had no opportunity to send the boy a skippin' and a scootin'. Mr. Wentworth, as was his custom, sat on the small white porch half dozing over a newspaper, and Benjy worked his garden undisturbed except for a glimpse of the face of the boy pressed against the bars of the gate across the road. Benjy shook his head.

"He's a comin'!" he told Mr. Wentworth. "You can't keep 'em home. They're all alike, bound to come a botherin' and a fussin' where they ain't wanted. You mark my word—he'll be a rip-tearin' across that road and a rip-tearin' into my garden and a rip-tearin' away all the comfort you get out of life on that porch! You mark my word!"

The two old men were as unlike as men could be. Mr. Wentworth—white-haired, tall, and dignified—wore, even on the hottest day, a linen collar. It was a low collar, but it was a linen collar, and his shirt was white—"a b'iled shirt," as Benjy called it, with a stiff bosom. His hat was a black hat, like a Grand Army hat, and except on the hottest days he wore a frock coat. On very hot days he wore a black alpaca coat and tucked a white handkerchief in his collar.

He was a fine type of decayed gentleman. But Benjy! Rough-bearded, rough-haired, rough-clothed, rough-spoken Benjy might have been a hard-handed, hard-souled old sea-dog or a tough-fisted, tough-headed old dock-walloper, to judge by his looks. And his manners were worse than his looks.

The two men had come together in the simplest manner possible. For years Mr. Wentworth had been bookkeeper in the

wholesale house where Benjy had driven the truck, and Benjy had rented the white cottage from Mr. Wentworth and kept bachelor hall there. Mr. Wentworth boarded at an eminently respectable boarding-house, but when Mr. Wentworth, superannuated, was told his services were no longer needed by his employers, he told Benjy he wished to occupy the white cottage himself.

"And I'll move out when I get good and ready," said Benjy; "but that needn't hinder you from movin' in when you get good and ready, neither."

So Mr. Wentworth moved in, and Benjy did not move out, and when Benjy lost his job both had become accustomed to living together. They divided the work of the place evenly enough between them. Benjy did the outdoor work and Mr. Wentworth, covering his black garments and white linen with blue gingham aprons, attended to the dish-washing and bed-making and other indoor chores. They split the cooking. Mr. Wentworth could fry a chop and Benjy could flap a flapjack. Sometimes they "et cold," as Benjy called it, and avoided cooking.

They were wonderfully poor. Mr. Wentworth had a life tenure in the white cottage (unless a certain will, still in the courts, should be set aside), and Benjy had his vegetable garden. To make the garden meet their needs Benjy gardened the entire property. Cabbages grew close against the alley fence, radishes edged the front walk, and beets and carrots took the place of a front lawn. If it could have been done, Benjy would have grown parsley between the bricks of the walk. Thus the two old men lived, Mr. Wentworth washing his dishes and sitting on the porch, and Benjy digging and weeding and peddling, and they kept themselves "off the town" and maintained their self-respect.

One day the little boy across the road, having peered between the bars of the gate even more wistfully than usual, raised the iron latch and opened the gate and crossed the road. He came directly to the white fence and looked through the pickets at Benjy weeding his beets.

"I know what you're doing," he said pleasantly when he had watched Benjy a while. "You're gardening a garden, aren't you?"

"Seems like," answered Benjy with un-

friendly gruffness, not taking the trouble to lift his head.

"You do it very nicely, don't you?" said the boy.

"Git along every bit as well if I ain't bothered by nobody," said Benjy.

"You mean you don't want me to bother you, don't you?" asked the boy, after thinking the answer over carefully. "I didn't know I would bother you. I just wanted to ask you something."

"I bet ye!" said Benjy sarcastically.

"'Bout a million things. Want to take up all my time and waste it and be a gen'ral nuisance, hey?"

"Oh, no! I just wanted to ask you if—if you ever were a pirate."

"A what?" shouted Benjy.

"A pirate," repeated the boy. "I didn't mean anything rude, but you looked so—so healthy and—and strong, you know, I thought you *might* have been a pirate."

"Huh!" said Benjy. "Pirate! Look like that, do I? No, I ain't never been none, and I ain't got time to talk, neither."

"I'm sorry," said the boy. "I rather like to talk with you; but do you suppose the man on the porch would have time to talk a little?"

"Ask him," suggested Benjy. "He won't do no more than bite you."

The boy opened the white gate and closed it carefully behind him. He walked up the neat brick walk to the foot of the porch steps.

"Good afternoon," he said politely.

"Good afternoon, sir," said Mr. Wentworth.

"That's a nice way to say it," went on the boy, "but I'm not really a 'sir,' you know. I'm only a boy yet. My name is Edward, and your friend said perhaps you might let me talk to you. I haven't talked to any one new since I came to this town. I don't get many operatunities."

Mr. Wentworth folded his newspaper.

"And you think you would like to talk to an old fellow like me?" he smiled. "Come up and sit down. What would you like to talk about?"

"Ships, if you please," said Edward. "I am very fond of talking about ships. My father and mother came to this country in a ship. His name is Rudolph—Rudolph Rothcranz. He imports hops and has an office in New York. They make beer of hops, you know. Would you mind telling me your name?"



"John Truscott Wentworth," said Mr. Wentworth.

"I think I'll call you Mr. Wentworth. You may call me Edward. We're all German, except me. Mother and father and Heiny and the maids are all German, but I am an adopted child, because mother and father are not acquainted with any storks in this country. That's funny, isn't it? I don't think there are any storks in this country to be acquainted with. So they adopted me when I was a little baby. I was a great trial. My insides, you know."

The boy stayed as long as he thought polite that time and talked with Mr. Wentworth of many things besides ships. He learned Benjy's name, and sighed when he learned Mr. Wentworth had never been a captain of a ship, because he said Mr. Wentworth looked like the captain of a ship.

Thereafter he opened the iron gate and crossed the road to the white cottage as often as he could. For a while Benjy was gruff and rough in earnest; then he kept up the roughness and gruffness because it pleased the boy. They pretended Benjy was a pirate and the boy a midshipman, but before long they did not have to pretend at all. Benjy, after that, was just Benjy, and the boy was the close friend of both the old men. Sometimes he took short walks with Mr. Wentworth, always chattering and asking innumerable questions; sometimes he helped Benjy in the garden or went with him to sell vegetables.

Once Benjy sent him hippety-hopping home, to return with Mrs. Rothcranz's permission to go fishing, and Benjy took him to the pond and taught him the secrets of hook and line and sinker. And one glorious day he actually had dinner with the two old men. They had fig-bars and bakery doughnuts, and it was a great occasion for all concerned. The boy was wistful no longer. His cup of happiness was full.

One day Edward crossed the road and took his accustomed seat at Mr. Wentworth's side.

"Well," he said, "I'm going to have a brother."

"A what?" exclaimed Mr. Wentworth.

"A brother," said Edward, "to play with, you know. I'm a lonely child, and I'm to have a brother to play with. He'll be a baby at first, because that's the

only way you can be sure they're properly raised. We wouldn't want one that wasn't properly raised. So mother is looking for a young one, and when she finds him we'll adopt him."

"H-m!" said Mr. Wentworth, jealous of the new brother already. "I hope you'll like him."

"Well, that's the strange thing," said Edward, his chin in his hand. "I suppose I will like him when he comes, but I don't seem to take much interest in him now, Mr. Wentworth. I'm afraid he's going to interfere considrabul. With my coming here, you know."

Benjy, knocking the ashes from his pipe, came to the porch.

"Thought you was goin' to help me pick peas to-day, young feller," he said. "Gone back on this ol' pirate, have ye?"

"Edward is going to have a new brother," announced Mr. Wentworth soberly.

"As soon as mother can find one to suit," explained Edward eagerly. "She's looking for one in the city—a good one—she don't want one to be a care like I was."

"A care!" shouted Benjy savagely. "You a care? Bless my eyes! The woman is—"

"The insides of me," explained Edward. "Gen'rally I was a nice baby, but my insides gave mother great worry. We want a better-insided baby this time."

"Well, bless my eyes!" exclaimed Benjy again. "Craziest idee I ever heard of! Wantin' a squallin', howlin' baby around when you don't need one. Plumb foolish!"

"Yes, I felt a little that way, too," said Edward, "but you see I'm a lonely child. I need a brother to play with."

"Hah!" cried Benjy angrily. "Parrot talk! You need a brother to play with! I guess me and Mr. Wentworth ain't good enough, hey? We ain't fitten, hey?"

"Benjy!" said Mr. Wentworth warningly.

"Wentworth, shut up!" said Benjy. "You feel the same as I do, only you ain't got spunk to say so. We ain't good enough to play with. We ain't iron-fenced, brick-housed, lawn-cut, all-fired good enough. That's what's the matter."

He threw his tin pail across the yard angrily and tramped around the house.

"Of course I'll come over *just* exactly the same," said Edward, taking Mr. Wentworth's hand.

"I hope so, my boy; I hope so!" said Mr. Wentworth, and there were tears in his eyes when Edward left him to seek Benjy in the back garden.

The search for a brother did not proceed very satisfactorily. There seemed to be a great demand for properly certified baby brothers; Mrs. Rothcranz was rather large and found it difficult to get to the city often; Mr. Rothcranz had his business to attend to on the few days he now went to town. Matrons of institutions by the dozen promised to keep Mrs. Rothcranz in mind and to let her know as soon as a properly qualified baby brother appeared; but time passed and Edward continued to visit Mr. Wentworth and Benjy.

Mr. Wentworth was unchanged, but Benjy seemed to have fallen back into the gruff selfishness of the days before the coming of Edward had softened his heart. He was short and gruff with Edward and short and irritating with Mr. Wentworth. He was snippish even with his cabbages.

It was at this moment that the catastrophe arrived. The will case had been decided and the will set aside. Mr. Wentworth's thin hands trembled as he opened the lawyer's letter, and trembled more as he read the notice to vacate the premises unless he was prepared to pay the back rent and accrued interest. He found Benjy in the garden. Benjy listened to the letter in sullen silence. It was the end of things. They could not pay the rent and live. What Benjy said no respectable press would print.

"It is hard — hard!" said Mr. Wentworth. "I must fall on the town. Well, others have gone to the poorhouse," he said with a sigh of resignation. "I will go without complaining. But you, Benjy, can find some gardening to do. Perhaps Mr. Rothcranz—"

Benjy raised his head and looked across the road toward the great brick mansion. He rubbed his hand over his tousled hair. He did not hesitate long. A grin of satisfaction wrinkled his tanned features, and he turned toward the cottage.

"Well, Benjy?" said Mr. Wentworth. Benjy turned back, irritated by the interruption.

"I'm goin' over to Rothcranz's," he said shortly. "I got a notion I can git the gardenin' job, and the sooner the better. There's no tellin' when I'll git throwed off this place."

"Good luck to you!" said Mr. Wentworth. "Good luck, Benjy!" and then he turned and rested his arm on the alley fence and leaned his head upon it and closed his eyes. He felt very old and weary; very helpless and poor, but he was glad Benjy could still hope for something better than the poorhouse.

When Benjy issued from the front door of the white cottage he was a different Benjy. For years he had respected Mr. Wentworth's belongings as the property of a superior, for Mr. Wentworth had been the landholder of the two, but now he raided Mr. Wentworth's room ruthlessly. What he wanted he took.

He threw his own coarse blue shirt in a corner and enveloped himself in one of Mr. Wentworth's precious stiff-bosomed "b'iled shirts." He fastened one of Mr. Wentworth's clean linen collars about his tanned neck. He tried to don a pair of Mr. Wentworth's shoes, but they were too small, and he polished his boots as well as he could polish boots that had never been polished since they were made.

He put on a pair of Mr. Wentworth's black trousers and drew the legs outside his boot-tops. He buttoned himself into Mr. Wentworth's frock coat, which squeezed him so tight he could hardly breathe. As a final touch he soaked his unruly hair in water and brushed it flat with one of Mr. Wentworth's brushes and set on top of it Mr. Wentworth's best black felt hat. In the hall he hesitated a moment with Mr. Wentworth's gold-headed cane in his hand, but put it away reluctantly. Something told him a gold-headed cane did not harmonize with Benjy.

When he was complete he looked like a pirate of the Spanish Main who had, for unknown reasons, suddenly taken the place and clothes of a Sunday-school superintendent. He crossed the road and walked to the front door of the big brick house.

Mr. Wentworth, as Benjy was ringing Mr. Rothcranz's bell, raised his head.

"Even Benjy!" he said sadly. "But we are all selfish. Each must look out for himself."

Mrs. Rothcranz herself came to the door to admit Benjy. She was a buxom woman, cheerful and well fed. For a moment she was inclined to slam the door in the face of the uncouth creature standing before her, but she knew that Mr. Rothcranz was within call.

"Well, what it iss?" she asked.

"Now—now—about a baby," said Benjy, turning his hat in his hand nervously. "About a baby, now. I hear how you want to adopt a first-class baby."

"Come right in," said Mrs. Rothcranz. "Sure we would adopt a baby. Mr. Rothcranz he is in the parlor, too, and he could hear about it. Come in. I don't know it your name, no?"

"Biggs," said Benjy. "Benjamin Biggs, ma'am," and he followed Mrs. Rothcranz into the parlor. Mr. Rothcranz, with a pile of mail on one chair, sat on another, with his stockinged feet on a third. As his wife and Benjy entered he dropped his feet hastily and felt for his slippers, sliding his feet into them.

"Rudy," said Mrs. Rothcranz pleasantly, "this could be Mr. Biggs who comes to talk about the baby maybe we adopt it."

"Fine!" said Mr. Rothcranz heartily, holding out his hand. "Sit down once. Mama is crazy to adopt a new baby right away. Maybe I ain't so crazy about it, but mama mostly has her way. You know about one, yes?"

Benjy seated himself and placed Mr. Wentworth's hat carefully on the floor. He felt for a handkerchief with which to wipe his face, but not finding one he wiped his forehead with the back of his forefinger. He could feel his drying hair rising in clumps.

"Well, now, ma'am," he said uneasily, "I guess you guessed right. That's what I sort of come for, although I'm a gardener by trade, as you may say. What you want is a boy baby—ain't that right?"

"Oh, sure!" exclaimed Mama Rothcranz. "A boy—to play with Edward. Girls maybe I should adopt after while yet. *Hein*, poppa?"

"So I heard tell—about the boy part," said Benjy nervously. "And you sort of set your mind on a—a brand-new one, like, didn't you?"

"So young as I can get him!" said Mrs. Rothcranz emphatically. "Und then I raise him like I want him. Yes!"

"I reckon!" said Benjy. "Get 'em young and you can sort o' mold 'em, hey? Good idee. 'Bout one day old, hey?"

"Ach, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Rothcranz, laughing. "Weaned he should be already, anyhow."

"Sure, mama!" said Mr. Rothcranz.

"And plenty weaned, too. With his teeth already, maybe. Not too young, mama."

"When you get 'em too blame young," said Benjy eagerly, "you got no end of trouble, ain't it so? Colic, hey? Bawlin' all the time, hey?"

"He's got the right, mama," said Mr. Rothcranz, nodding his head approvingly. "Better we should get one past colic time, yes?"

"Sure!" said Benjy more eagerly. "With teeth to eat things. And hair so you can cut it. That's the idee! When you get 'em like that you know what you're gettin'. Four years old, hey?"

"Ach, no!" cried Mrs. Rothcranz. "Four year old is no baby—"

"Now, mama, wait! Wait!" said Mr. Rothcranz. "It is an idea for you, maybe. Walking and talking a four-year-old would be, and—"

"Sure he would be!" exclaimed Benjy enthusiastically. "Playin' round and not fallin' down an' gettin' hurt all the time. Saves a lot of work."

"Y-e-s!" said Mrs. Rothcranz lingeringly. "It saves me a lot of work yet. Sleeping all night and such. A good, strong four-year-old—"

"Or maybe five," said Benjy hastily. "Nothin' like gettin' 'em ready-raised, if they're raised right. A six-year-old, raised proper—"

"Yet a minute he was four, and now he is six already!" exclaimed Mrs. Rothcranz.

"Six or seven," said Benjy hastily, "so he's had them children's diseases like measles and mumps. You get a good, healthy eight-year-old and make sure he's had whoopin'-cough already—"

"I should get an eight-year-old!" cried Mrs. Rothcranz indignantly.

"To play with Edward," Benjy explained. "That's what you want him for, ain't it, and what kind of fun is a nine-year-old like Edward goin' to have unless he's got a nine-year-old to play with? Some nice fetched-up kid ten or 'leven years old is what a lonely feller like Edward needs. He needs a brother old enough to keep him playin' hard. Now you get a good boy about twelve, say, strong enough to look out for a little feller like Edward, and you've got a real brother for him. What say?"

"A fine big boy from such a good family ain't so bad, mama, if he was twelve years old," said Mr. Rothcranz sagely.

"Twelve *or* thirteen," said Benjy hurriedly, "and nice raised, and you save a lot of trouble. You'd know what you was gettin'. Course, if I was Edward I'd *prefer* a bigger feller to play with, so he could take me swimmin' an' fishin' an' see I didn't git drowned. I'd *prefer* a brother about—say—sixteen year old."

Mrs. Rothcranz opened her lips, but she did not speak. She stared at Benjy, but nothing could stop Benjy now.

"But there you are!" said Benjy. "I know just what you was goin' to say. You take a feller sixteen or eighteen year old, or nineteen, say, an' what does he do? Starts smokin' cigarettes an' playin' pool an' stayin' out late an' foolin' after the girls, and you've got no end of worry. No tellin' what tricks he'd lead a nice feller like Edward into. If I was Edward's folks I'd say his brother ought to be a mite older—old enough to be set in his ways—and have some *carackter* formed up. I'd say one about—"

He glanced at Mrs. Rothcranz doubtfully. She was gazing at him in open-mouthed amazement. He wiped his forehead with his finger and plunged.

"One about thirty year old, say," he said.

Mr. Rothcranz opened *his* mouth, but he did not speak. He smiled amusedly.

"About thirty," Benjy hurried on, "and that knowed something about runnin' a garden, say. Thirty *or* forty, because forty would be more safer. But the dickens is you can't hardly get a feller forty years old, because if he's good he's in business or married or something. To my way of thinkin' a feller don't know how to play with kids until he's gone past fifty, and when a feller's just about fifty is when he's goin' to get married if he ever is, and no tellin' who he might fetch you home for a darter-in-law. But when a feller is fifty-five, and ain't married, chances are he ain't goin' to get married. Only—"

"Only—" said Mrs. Rothcranz.

"Only," said Benjy, "if I was lookin' for a playmate for a nice little feller like Edward I'd be mighty careful about it. I wouldn't take nobody under sixty year old, because sixty is the time when a feller starts lovin' little tykes like Edward and would do anything for them. When a feller is sixty he knows all he's goin' to know about gardenin', and he likes it, and he likes to have a little feller come and fool

round and ask questions. Yep, I'd say seventy was a mite too old, but when a feller has started gardenin' at sixty he's a mighty useful man to have around the place by the time he's sixty-eight. I'd say sixty-eight was about right. If I had a boy like Edward and was adoptin' a brother for him I'd pick out a brother sixty-eight year old, *and* a bachelor, *and* healthy, *and* settled in his ways, *and* used to Edward and his tricks and manners. That's what I'd do. I'd pick a feller like that, that Edward was already so fond of it would break his heart to be tore away from him. And—and a feller that could be handy around a big place like this, gardenin' the garden and all."

Benjy stopped short. He looked down at his big brown hands and twisted them together nervously.

"I know a feller," he said hoarsely, "a feller that meets all them specifications. An old feller that thinks the world an' all of—"

Through the hall came the soft tread of Edward's feet and the boy entered the room. He flew to Benjy's side and took the old man's hand.

"Why, Benjy! I didn't know you were here," he cried joyfully.

"Listen once, Edward," said Mrs. Rothcranz. "Your Mr. Benjy comes to see about the little brother I should get you. He says it is better you should have a bigger one—sixty-eight years old already, maybe, that could garden some—"

"Well, come to think of it," said Benjy, putting his hand on Edward's shoulder, "I don't know as a feller'd have much time to garden with a lively little feller like Edward to 'tend to. Leave out the garden part. Sixty-eight year old, *and* hale and hearty—"

"Well, come! Talk up once, Edward! How you like Mr. Benjy for a baby brother?" asked Mrs. Rothcranz jokingly.

"I'd like him better than any baby brother that ever was!" exclaimed Edward, but Benjy was out of his chair.

"Me?" he exclaimed. "Me be Edward's brother? Why, I ain't fitten to be his brother—I ain't been raised right. I'm common folks. I didn't mean me, ma'am. I meant Mr. Wentworth. Poorhouse wouldn't hurt an ol' feller like me, but Mr. Wentworth was raised gentlemanly."

Mrs. Rothcranz lifted her brows questioningly.



"Mr. Wentworth is my *other* friend," said Edward simply.

"Well, how you like *him* for a baby brother?" asked Mrs. Rothcranz.

"Why, *he* couldn't be a baby brother," laughed Edward joyfully. "He's as old as old. He's always going to live in the white house and be my Mr. Wentworth, and Benjy's always going to live there and be my Benjy."

"We been put out," said Benjy thickly. "We been thrown on the town. That's why I come over. If you could sort of take Mr. Wentworth, ma'am, and—and let me get along for myself—why—why—"

"And so you think maybe you get mama to adopt him for a baby, yes?" said Mr. Rothcranz, chuckling. "Maybe you like them so much, Edward, mama should adopt both of them yet for baby brothers—twins, yes? One in blue, maybe, and one in pink."

He laughed good-naturedly.

"Anyhow," he said, "I go over and see

your Mr. Wentworth once," and he wiggled his feet more securely into his slippers and went out, and Benjy went with him.

When Mr. Rothcranz returned he was in a jovial mood. He lifted Edward and tossed him in the air.

"So!" he said. "Your Mr. Wentworth is too old for a baby brother, but I adopt him anyway."

"Poppa!" exclaimed Mrs. Rothcranz.

"Sure!" he laughed. "And Benjy, too. A pair of twin grandpas, yes? I buy me the white cottage and leave them in it, mama. Edward needs it no baby brother with two friends like he got."

"*Sei dank!*" cried Mrs. Rothcranz. "Then I could get me a girl baby right quick, Rudolph!"

"Sure!" said her husband, smiling. "Mit colic and teething and all, yes, mama. The younger the better. Girls can't be too young, no, mama?"

"*'Raus mit!*" she laughed, and then she kissed him.

## ON OWNING A CAR

BY FRANK X. FINNEGAN



PURCHASING a motor-car is the swiftest and surest method I know of for transforming a normal, well-balanced citizen into an arrogant, purse-proud enemy of the human race. I say this because I've seen the thing worked out. I know what I'm talking about, which is quite unusual in persons who write instructive articles for publication.

I have a neighbor who was until recently one of the most humble and well-meaning men in our street. His name is Blivins. He has admitted paying personal property taxes, in which he stands alone, merely because some one told him the law required it.

When he was summoned for jury service he would hustle right down-town and strangle himself for two weeks in a hermetically sealed court-room instead of telling the judge he had housemaid's knee and

was likely to collapse in the box any minute, as the rest of us do. He said he thought it was his duty.

That's the sort of man Blivins used to be. Then he was roped, thrown, and branded by an automobile salesman while suffering from an acute attack of *dementia gasolina* at a motor-show. Before he was restored to comparative sanity Blivins was the owner of a sixty-horse-power, twin-screw, turbine-engine automobile, equipped with tabulator, back-spacer, bilge-keels, and centerboard.

From that hour he was a changed man. If he had been merged into a corporation he could not have had less respect for the law. He treated all citizens on foot with the withering scorn that made the feudal barons so popular among their light-hearted vassals. Once he assured me personally that he did not give a dang when I pointed out that his car was smoking at our



curb in the presence of ladies and slowly suffocating those guests on our front porch who had never learned how to inhale gasoline fumes. Blivins, I may say, became an anarchistic, law-defying plutocrat the moment he put his foot on the clutch and grabbed the steering-wheel of his machine.

The fact that we all know he placed a second mortgage on his home and borrowed seven hundred dollars from his father-in-law to buy the car doesn't bother Blivins in the least. It makes no difference in his attitude toward the crawling worms that cumber the street-crossings when he is motoring. He mangles 'em just as thoroughly as though he had money.

When the mortgage is foreclosed and the sheriff's men hurl Blivins's little prattling babes out into the snow-covered street he will probably expect me to go out like a St. Bernard dog, with a little keg of brandy fastened to my collar, and retrieve 'em. But I won't. I'll recall the times that their demented father, having attached to his juggernaut the most insulting horn that the ingenuity of man has devised, used to lie in wait for me near our street-corner after dark and watch me break the world's record for the standing broad jump.

Soon after embarking upon his criminal career Blivins began to glory in his shame. He even left off the goggles with which he at first disguised himself and took a chance in the open. After sedulous practise on dogs, chickens, and little, babbling children on the highway he became so expert in attack that he could nip the heel of a crossing policeman with the rear tire alone. This is considered neat work. It sufficiently humiliates the officer without maiming him for life.

Before long I noted several startling physical changes in my unfortunate neighbor, quite common in that particular form of insanity. They included astigmatism, myopia, loss of memory, and a mild form

of locomotor ataxia. I detected the eye trouble when he failed to recognize me and other acquaintances with whom he had been offensively familiar for years, though we stood within ten feet of his car. It didn't annoy me at all, but I was sorry to see Blivins failing so rapidly.

On several occasions he was presented at court. His attendants were attired in traditional court costumes, while Blivins wore an air of extreme disgust. It was at these times that his loss of memory manifested itself. While he could readily recall various facts, such as the name of the President of the United States, the number of inches in a foot, and the high cost of living, he was quite unable to remember how long it took his car to pass a given point. This resulted in many arguments which were invariably decided in favor of the affirmative. This was the side Blivins did not represent.

I discovered the insidious advance of locomotor ataxia on my friend when I chanced to pass his office-building one day at luncheon-time. He was climbing into his car to ride a block to his favorite restaurant. It saddened me to realize that poor old Blivins was no longer able to walk that short distance. Only a few months before I had known him to walk several miles around a billiard-table in the course of a single evening.

It was only a short time afterward that I descried an officious-looking stranger standing in front of Blivins's home, on which the mortgage flapped idly to and fro in the pleasant breeze. He was looking longingly at the motor-car, which seemed to be breathing hard with excitement. In fact, he had an attachment for it, and when he had read the document to Blivins he got in and cheerily drove our local smoke nuisance away. Now, I presume, Blivins will find it necessary to get a wheel-chair or stay in bed the rest of his life.

#### LIFE'S PITY

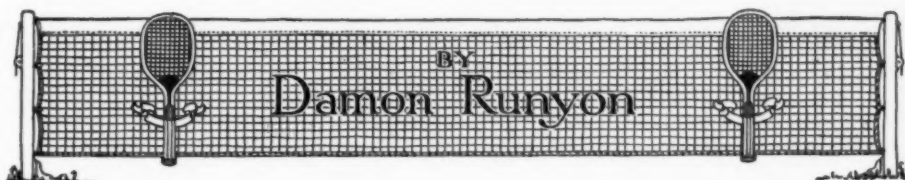
Poor, bent backs 'neath loads of pain too heavy,  
Tear-dimmed eyes with all their luster fled,  
All the crying hearts and weary waitings—  
All that silent army of the dead!

All the empty chairs—and idle playthings—  
The little hands so still—the waiting years—  
The mother-pain, the aching hearts, the yearnings—  
Ah, God—the tears—the tears!

*Gladys Hall*

# Mc LOUGHLIN

## THE WORLD'S GREATEST TENNIS PLAYER



**I**T was just after Maurice McLoughlin had been crowned the greatest tennis-player in all the world. It was just after those memorable duels with Brookes and Wilding, the slashing Australasians, out on Long Island, when the slim stripling from the Golden Gate outfought and outgeneraled his veteran opponents in the most grueling matches ever played in the history of the game.

The laurels of championship were still fresh and green upon the McLoughlin brow, so to speak, as he sat at his breakfast in a New York hotel. He was still being fulsomely lauded over the land. He was still being idolized by that which we call society; the newspapers were still recounting how this red-headed, freckle-faced lad of twenty-four had gathered most of the glory of the international struggle even while the trophy was being lost to these shores. And I meantime was learning why.

It is easy to under-

stand the success of McLoughlin, the tennis-player, after meeting McLoughlin, the man. The most spectacular figure that has flashed across the sporting horizon in many a year, he has all that powerful personality that you will generally find in real champions. Few men win to supreme honors in any field of

sporting endeavor unless they stand out above their fellows in more ways than mere physical prowess.

Later McLoughlin was to meet defeat in the national tournament at Newport, from R. Norris Williams, the young collegian who was beaten in the international, but knowing McLoughlin, I have no doubt that he accepted defeat in the same philosophical manner as he accepted victory. Tennis experts agree that in the eyes of the public McLoughlin is the greatest tennis-player in the world, and that his defeat in three sets by Williams—quoting one of those experts literally—while reflecting a



McLOUGHLIN AT THE  
OF HIS BACKHAND  
VOLLEY STROKE

CONCLUSION  
HALF-

*From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York*



THE WORLD'S CHAMPION TENNIS PLAYER AT THE AGE OF TWO YEARS

*From a photograph by C. A. Marston, Carson City, Nevada*

world of credit upon the latter, cannot be viewed otherwise than as a natural result of the Californian being a shade or two off his usual form. McLoughlin himself would never put it that way. He was a good winner, and he can be no less than a good loser. It is the McLoughlin nature, and the nature of a real champion.

He is a modest fellow—McLoughlin—modesty personified. He much prefers talking about other people than himself, and he is rather inclined to deprecate his own deeds. He is a study in the economy of motion. There is no waste effort in anything he does. I noticed that even in his eating he unconsciously reduces the movements of his hands to a minimum. Where my own hands would hover hesitatingly in air for a spoon or a salt-cellar, his fingers would go direct to the mark. That is a very small matter, perhaps, but it is that same conservation of motion that is characteristic of McLoughlin on the tennis-court.

He is always driving straight to the mark; there is never any hesitating once he starts. Well have they nicknamed him the "Comet of the Courts."

McLoughlin is not a large fellow, but he is by no means small. He is in that class we call medium-sized. In condition he does not weigh over 152 pounds, and in the quiet gray tweed street apparel he was wearing the morning I saw him he seemed smaller than he really is. His shoulders

are very slightly stooped, and though he carries himself with a light, free swing, there is nothing to suggest that marvelous muscular strength and driving power that is the despair of his opponents.

He is the embodiment of healthful youth—of glowing, glittering youth—clear-eyed and clean-skinned. His twenty-four years sit lightly upon his shoulders. He will never look much older than he does to-day—he is that type.

His eyes are—but the color of McLoughlin's eyes change with his moods. At first glance they seem to be a lively gray, but when he is in complete repose—and mainly he is in complete repose to a point of dreaminess—they switch to a placid blue. Suddenly, when touched by the fire of interest, they seem to light up into a hazel glow. It seemed to me that



YOUNG McLOUGHLIN, AGE FOURTEEN, AS A MEMBER OF THE CHOIR OF THE CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR, IN JENKINTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA. HE SANG SOPRANO

*From a photograph by Gilbert & Bacon, Philadelphia, Pa.*



"THE CALIFORNIA COMET'S" FIRST CUP, THE GOLDEN GATE JUNIOR CLUB TROPHY, WON AT GOLDEN GATE PARK, SAN FRANCISCO, WHEN McLOUGHLIN WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE

those eyes had some subtle trick of weighing, summarizing, classifying, and cataloging people and things at a glance, even when they appeared drowsiest.

It is a calculating eye—the eye of a mathematician, and the experts will tell you that no man has ever displayed the marvelous accuracy and judgment of pace and distance on a tennis-court that has been displayed by Maurice McLoughlin.

I have never seen McLoughlin's fighting orb—when he is out there in the thick of an international fray, for instance, with the silent thousands cramped in around him, and the hush of expectancy over all as he sways to the volleying of some tough adversary—I have never been that close up—but I can imagine those changeable eyes as a dull red under such circumstances, matching the color of the thick hair that thatches his head—a head rather long, from front to back, but as clearly cut as a medallion in bronze.

The McLoughlin forehead is neither intellectually high nor unintellectually low,

but it rises smooth and clear from a curving line of reddish eyebrows that sweep from temple to temple without interruption to that point where the hair juts out and flows back in a fiery cascade. It is a well-balanced forehead, betokening calm judgment and good sense. He has a well-shaped nose, with a wide-slashed, pleasantly lined mouth beneath, which is constantly opening in an engaging smile and displaying a line of perfectly formed and startlingly white teeth. The McLoughlin jaw is firm and sharply defined—it is the fighting jaw. He has an extraordinary pair of hands. They are large, but unusually well-shaped. The fingers are long and tapering and perfectly formed, but the gripping power is at once apparent. The palm of the right hand is heavily calloused where it has infolded the racket-handle.

I have always had an impression that red-headed people have red-headed tempers, and I was somewhat surprised when all of McLoughlin's friends told me that "Maurie" is unusually sweet-tempered.

FINISH OF THE FAMOUS FOREHAND  
STROKE THAT HAS TANTALIZED  
MANY AN OPPONENT

*Photo. by Underwood & Underwood, N.Y.*



They all call him Maurie, when such a lad should by all the rights and laws of nomenclature and human nature be called "Mac"—being just that sort of fellow. I mentioned the matter of temper to McLoughlin.

"Well," he said, "if I am good-natured, as they say, it's because I have had plenty of practise. When I was a little boy I heard that all red-headed people were supposed to be quick-tempered, and I rather resented it as a reflection upon red hair. I determined to prove that it was not so, and I have always schooled myself against letting my temper get away from me. Oh, yes, I've been riled lots of times, down inside of me, but I've tried desperately not to show it."

He smiled as if the thought had called up memories of internal rage, and the smile developed all his facial freckles. Freckles go with red hair as naturally as the ham mates with the fried egg. I do not know how a red-haired man without freckles looks, because I never saw one, and if I did I

would regard him as spurious. McLoughlin is fully freckled. There is space on his face and arms and hands for one or two more, but they must be small freckles; he has all the large freckles he can use. If there is ever an open tournament for the freckle championship the Californian will win in a walk.

It has been my good fortune to see McLoughlin play in some of his important tennis matches, and

I have never seen an athlete who has more of what I might call "color" on the field of athletic battle than this young champion. It is really personality, I suppose—the personality that is his charm in ordinary life, carried on to the field. I mean there is a certain interest in watching him work over and above his mere ability as a great tennis-player. Many wonderful athletes, and aggregations of athletes, are uninteresting from the spectator's point of view because they are lacking in

that subtle thing called "color."

Then there are others not so great who are a joy to an audience



*Photo. by  
Paul  
Thompson*

THE CORDIAL McLOUGHLIN  
SMILE



START OF THE  
FOREHAND  
DRIVE, A COMBI-  
NATION OF  
VELOCITY AND  
ACCURACY

*From a photo-  
graph by  
Paul Thompson,  
New York*



because of their "color"—because of their sheer personality.

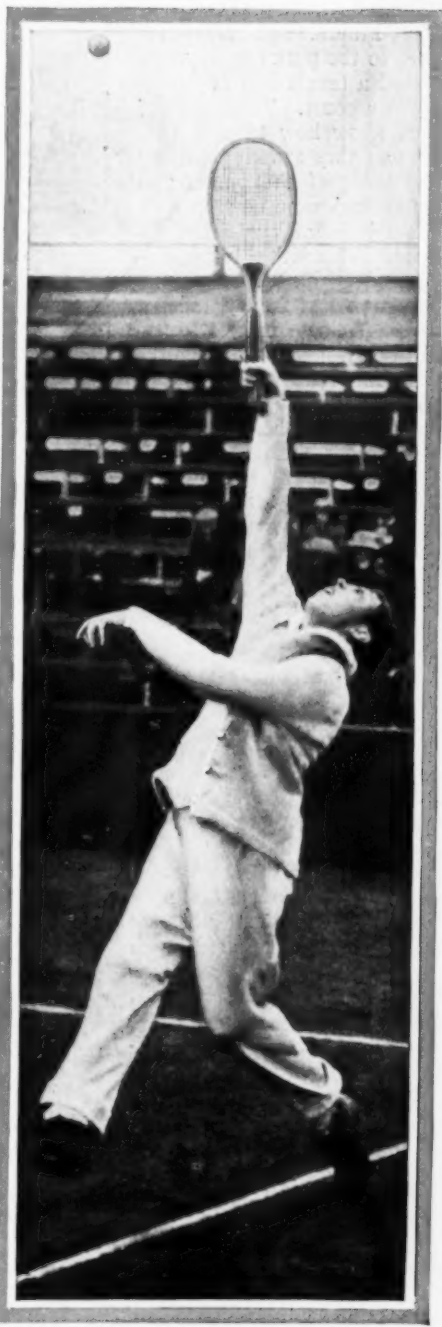
McLoughlin's effect on a crowd, and on people in a crowd who may not know anything of tennis, is wonderful. He has what the sporting world calls "class," and a crowd recognizes class the instant it flashes forth. McLoughlin is of the stuff that popular idols are made.

Withal, the young Californian does not care much for adulation. He loves his tennis, but only for the tennis. The rest of it—the hue and cry after him, and the hero worship—he regards as a sort of necessary evil. He could be a social lion if he desired, but he seems to think more of getting to bed early and acquiring nine hours' sleep.

When he is playing at the big society resorts he generally stops at some modest hotel far from the social haunts. His excuse is that he is in training, and that he cannot keep late hours for feasting or dancing and remain in physical trim. So he goes along getting his rest, dieting carefully, and attending strictly to the business of being the best tennis-player in the world. It is not so easy as it sounds. To get ready for the round of summer tournaments McLoughlin has to start training in the early part of the year, and training for tennis means plenty of tennis.

It is wearying work when it becomes a sort of business, however pleasurable it is just as a pastime. Once when he was first starting out McLoughlin played so much tennis that he wearied of the game and cast aside his racket, declaring that he would never again take it up. He had played day in and day out for weeks and weeks, from morning until night, and he was satiated and stale.

It seems odd that this youth once had an ambition to be a baseball-player, and that this ambition endured long after he had become a good tennis-player. He was spending all his leisure playing baseball when his family moved to San Francisco from Philadelphia, at which time Maurice was fourteen years old. The McLoughlins reached San Francisco at a period of the year when it was too late for Maurice or his brother to enter public school. They had to await the opening of another term, and it was during this interim that they discovered the public tennis-courts in Golden Gate Park, not far from home.



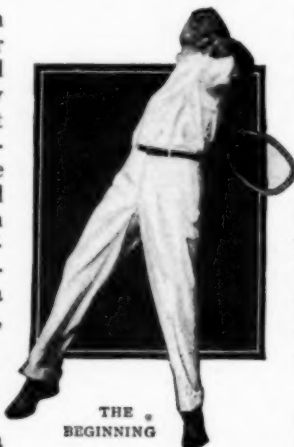
MCLOUGHLIN'S TERRIFIC OVERHEAD SMASH, THE STROKE IRRESISTIBLE. THIS IS THE ONLY PHOTOGRAPH OF MCLOUGHLIN IN EXISTENCE SHOWING THIS PARTICULAR MANEUVER

With a racket that cost him \$1.25 Maurice and his brother went to the park one day and batted a tennis ball aimlessly about a court. They did not even know how to play tennis, but they soon learned the rudiments of the game, and before long were playing with other boys of the neighborhood. There they were discovered by S. R. Marvin, a man who had money, leisure, and a tremendous interest in tennis, and who began encouraging the lads on the public courts.

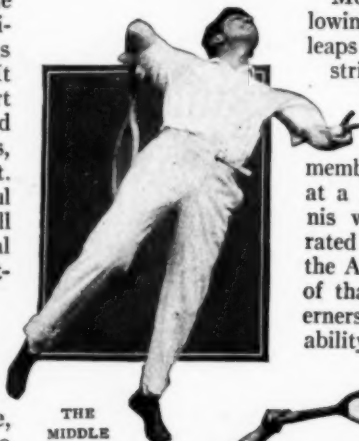
Eventually he formed a junior club, and it was while he was fostering that organization that his attention was attracted to Maurice. It seems that from the start young McLoughlin developed a veritable genius for tennis, and Marvin recognized it. Before very long the youthful phenom had outstripped all the other boys in individual ability and had begun to attract the notice of older men.

After he had won about everything that was to be won among the lads of anywhere near his own age, his admirers induced him to enter a regular man's size tournament at San Rafael, and in that tournament he drew for his opponent Alonzo Bell, a tennis expert of considerable note. The boy, McLoughlin, was beaten, but he gave Bell a hard game, and that established him as a rising star of the Western tennis world.

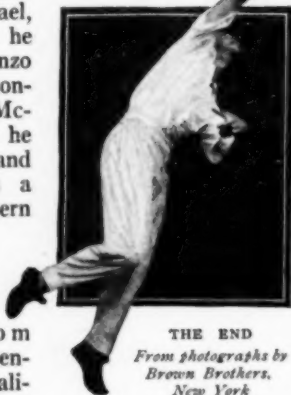
Meantime he entered Lowell High School in San Francisco, and eventually graduated from that institution. He later entered the University of California, but his college career was nipped in the very bud by the lure of a trip to Australia to play in the big



THE  
BEGINNING



THE  
MIDDLE



THE END

*From photographs by  
Brown Brothers,  
New York*

THREE PHASES OF  
McLOUGHLIN'S CANNON-  
BALL SERVICE. IN SERVICE  
HE IS WITHOUT A PEER

tournament there. So McLoughlin is not a college man, but he has acquired a considerable education from reading and travel.

Before he attracted national attention the youngster won the city, State, and Coast championships of California. Once, when he had played a close game with George Janes, a Western star, Tracy Crawford, a famous exponent of the game, remarked to him: "I'll give you just three years to win the championship."

McLoughlin won it the following year, showing by what leaps and bounds he outstripped the judgment and prophecy of the experts.

He made his first trip East in 1908 as a member of a California team at a time when Western tennis was not so very highly rated on the Atlantic side of the Alleghanies, and the work of that team woke the Easterners to a realization of the ability of the Western contingent. It has never since been lightly regarded. Mc-

Loughlin speaks of that occasion with quiet satisfaction, but more because it reflected credit upon his section of the country than anything else.

McLoughlin was born in Carson City, Nevada, of Scotch-Irish parents. He was the fourth child in a family of five children—three boys and two girls—or perhaps you might say he was the third child, as the two eldest children are twins. There is no record of any member of the family having taken cognizance of the game of lawn-tennis up to the time Maurice became interested.

The father of the family, George McLoughlin, was a

machinist in the railroad shops at Carson City for some time, and later he became connected with the United States mint there, and has ever since been attached to the mints of the nation in an official capacity. At present his title is superin-

herited that accuracy of eye and judgment of distance that are part and parcel of his amazing tennis genius from his father, and from his mother came that even mental poise which seems proof against nervous excitement, however bitterly the tide of



MAURICE E. McLOUGHLIN, THE ACKNOWLEDGED GREATEST TENNIS-PLAYER OF THE WORLD.  
FROM HIS MOST RECENT PICTURE

*From a photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York*

tendent of the mechanical department of the San Francisco mint. He went to Philadelphia from Carson City, and from Philadelphia he was transferred to San Francisco.

Undoubtedly Maurice McLoughlin in-

battle may seem to be flowing against him. Mrs. McLoughlin is a calm, placid woman, ever sweetly serene, and with a low, soft voice that she has transmitted to her son. She is of distinguished family. Her brother is Professor Addison Verrill, the

THE START OF HIS  
BACKHAND

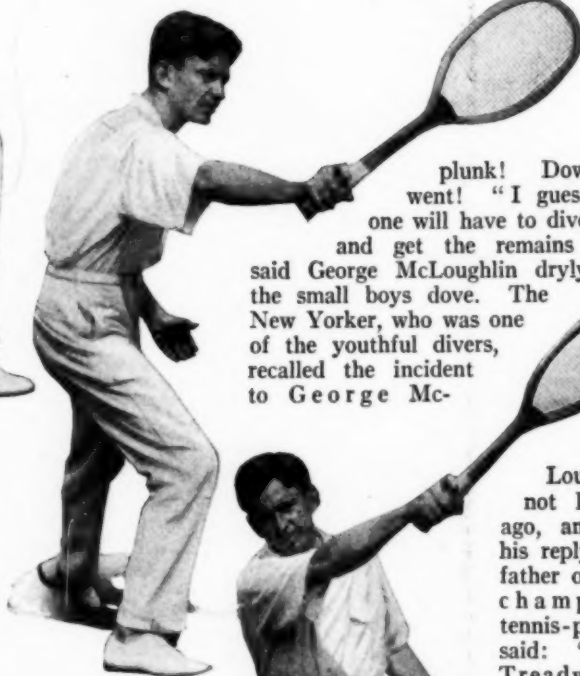
mechanical genius of George McLoughlin. He made the first typesetting-machine ever made in this country, and he made a submarine that antedated Holland by years. He tried that submarine boat of his out at Treadway's Pond in Carson City one day, and among other members of his audience were several small boys, since grown to manhood. One of them now lives in New York. Another was the late Philip Verrill Mighels, the novelist, a cousin of Maurice McLoughlin. The submarine buzzed once around the pond, as per the most sanguine expectations of the inventor, and then—

plunk! Down she went! "I guess some one will have to dive down and get the remains now," said George McLoughlin dryly, and the small boys dove. The New Yorker, who was one of the youthful divers, recalled the incident to George Mc-

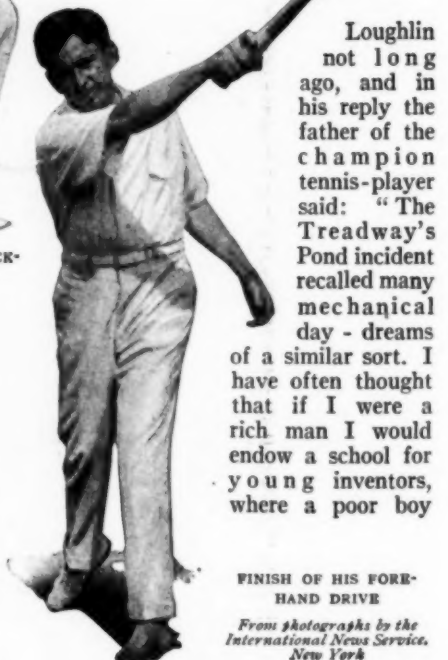
famous biologist of Harvard.

There never was a more remarkable mind for mechanics than the mind of George McLoughlin. It is said of him that he could glance at a piece of string and tell you to a hair's breadth just what it measured. He could look once at a bolt, for instance, and walk away and get a nut that would exactly fit that bolt. He walked into the Carson City mint one day, an imposing figure of a man, over six feet in height and built proportionately; he walked in chewing a straw, as was his custom, and taking one glance at his surroundings he walked out again and notified the United States government that it was minting its money upside down.

By the simple expedient of inverting the machinery he did away with flawed coin. Many of the minting machinery improvements in present-day use are due to the

THE FINISH OF HIS BACK-  
HAND

Loughlin not long ago, and in his reply the father of the champion tennis-player said: "The Treadway's Pond incident recalled many mechanical day - dreams of a similar sort. I have often thought that if I were a rich man I would endow a school for young inventors, where a poor boy

FINISH OF HIS FORE-  
HAND DRIVE

From photographs by the  
International News Service,  
New York

could have a chance to work out bright ideas under the supervision of scientific instructors. Such a school and shops, I think, could be made self-supporting if properly managed. It is difficult for a man, though he may be a fairly practical mechanic, to interest capital in a scheme that seems to him perfectly practical. I find that men of capital are, as a rule, not mechanical, but I have had little opportunity of late years of putting that to the test.

"I remember building the first typesetting-machine in San Francisco for Colonel Fry, of the California Bank, and one of the owners of the San Francisco *Alta*. The first drawings and outline sketch of that machine were made on the wet sand on the beach at the old Cliff House, and when the crowd got too large we moved on. That machine was as crude as its first drawings, but there must always be a *first*.

"While building that machine I had many interesting talks with Colonel Fry. I recollect one in particular—it was in regard to erecting a wave motor at a cliff near the Cliff House, piping the compressed air to a reservoir tunneled in Telegraph Hill and thence to consumers, to be used instead of steam. This, of course, was before the days of crude oil. He thought so well of it that he explained it to Ralston (president of the California Bank). He was very much pleased with the plan, and an interview was arranged for the next day at his office.

"He was alone when I was shown in. I handed him Fry's note, and I shall never forget the expression of that man's face when he asked if I was the Mr. McLoughlin mentioned. I said I was. He looked at me for a moment and said: 'I expected to meet an experienced engineer, not a beardless boy. However, sit down

and tell me what you know of this scheme.'

"I was standing at the back of a chair at the time, for I wanted something to hang onto, but before I got through with the details of the project he was more interested than I was, and twice interrupted me with the remark, 'I wish you were older.' I never saw him but once after that. He came to the shop to see if the typesetting-machine worked, but he was more interested in me and the power plant than he was in the typesetter. I think we might have been good friends if he had lived. He asked me what I thought a rough estimate of the cost would be. I said: 'Nearly a million dollars.' 'I like you better now,' was the only remark he made. You would have thought him a queer man."

Young Maurice McLoughlin never followed in his father's footsteps so far as mechanics are concerned. What time he has not devoted to tennis-playing has been given over to selling real estate in Oakland. I am inclined to the belief that McLoughlin regards real estate as his business more than he does tennis. There is no money in amateur tennis, though one be the best tennis-player in all the world, and there is undeniably money in Oakland real estate.

"If it wasn't for my employer I would not have the opportunity to do much tennis-playing," says McLoughlin. "He is interested in the game and gives me a chance to compete in the tournaments."

One other diversion has interested the young tennis champion of late years, and that is hunting. He devotes a little time each year to gunning, but only a little time, because a man who has to look after a tennis championship between sales of Oakland real estate has only a mighty little time for any other pursuits.

### MY PACK OF DREAMS

LIFE, do not take my dreams away—

You may have all but these:

Put poverty upon my back

And stoop me with disease;

'Reave me of hope, of friends, of love

And what thy whim besems—

Make nothing out of all I have—

But do not slay my dreams.

Harry Kemp



# RED SAUNDERS'S ORANGE BLOSSOMS

BY HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS



It was a pleasant, rainy day on the ranch, and Red, who was as methodical as a bookkeeper in some matters, sorted out his old letters from his war-box. I always liked to be on hand at this clean-up, for there were odd photographs, strange newspaper clippings, and a fine salad of unexpected news. Red took a letter from an envelope.

"Well," he said, "that's from little old Santiago! You weren't here when he hit the ranch. It was that time you pulled for the hills, placer mining. I come across him at Tobe's place. He was fiddlin' for a little quiet dance in the back room. Keno Jim had made a killin' and was blowin' in the proceeds. Twenty men was doin' a war-dance, accompanied by one fiddle and bottles going pop-pop-pop to keep time to the music.

"This Santiago proposition kinder took my eye. He took my ear first, for above all the racket of them boots stompin' on the floor I got a touch of real violin sound. I sure do like to hear a fiddle well played. This made me look at the music.

"He was a small-sized, yaller chap, with long hair like a horse's mane. He had very light, long fingers that scampered over the fiddle like trained mice, stoppin' to nibble when they got hold of a good note. But his eyes had me interested. They was big, black eyes, with something kinder fierce in 'em. You could bet the man behind them eyes was out of the ordinary.

"The rest of his features showed he had Injun blood in him. Mostly I don't like half-breeds.

"So I kinder held out against Santiago at first, seein' the streak of Injun, but when the boys got tired of tearin' the

place down I slid over toward the fiddle and asked the lad if he wouldn't saw me out a small piece of real music.

"He threw his black lamps on me and smiled in a way that made me overlook the Injun part of it.

"I'll play you something very gladly," he said.

"And my little friend could play that fiddle! He forgot all about everything, and he breathed hard while he was working his medicine.

"Old Keno Jim had lots to drink, but it got even into his hide. His hand was on my shoulder when the piece finished.

"Get him to do some more, Red," he said. 'I don't like it, but I can't quit listening to it.'

"Well, that's how I come to know Santiago. He told me he had hoofed it most of the way from Chile—just walked right along from one place to another until he landed with us. Sometimes, of course, he had to take a boat, but mostly he walked.

"It's quite a little stroll from Chile, South America, to Dakota, North America, but he didn't seem to think much of that.

"Well, I had to have him come down to the ranch to play for the boys. We was a music-lovin' crowd at the old Chantay Seeche, and about all we got was Sammy playin' the mouth-organ and Foster scratchin' opera tunes on his fiddle.

"The ranch approved of Santiago. His name wasn't Santiago, but I started to call him Santiago, and as he always answered to the name I couldn't find any sense in changin' it.

"Santiago, he took to the ranch. So the boss gave him a string of ponies, and him and us we was the same parties from that on.

"He had nice notions in his nut. He'd

get up and talk, with his long, black hair flyin' and his long, dark hands flyin' and the fire burnin' in his eyes—all about the joys of liberty and the beautifulness of women and the magic of music.

"We liked to hear that kind of talk, and Santiago, he meant what he said.

"About two weeks after he joined us a bunch, including him, rode to town for a little outing. Santiago took me in charge.

"See now, Colorado' (that's Spanish for Red) 'this night you come with me,' says he. 'Let the rest go to drink and to gamble and we'll hunt for other amusement.'

"All right,' I said. 'Let her flicker.'

"So we asked them in the drug-store what was doin' in the way of unalcoholic amusements.

"The drug-store man looked kinder surprised at me asking that question, but he says: 'The Presbyterian church is having a bazaar down the street; lots of pretty girls and a nice quiet time, with a good feed.'

"So away we went.

"That drug-store gent had not lied a bit. There was pretty girls, and everybody was pleasant, and the grub was like a fairy table. First off we bought a lot of candy. What them pretty girls did to us poor cow-punchers ought to be a felony.

"But there was one pretty, slim little thing, as white as moonlight on fresh snow, that stood back from it all. She smiled at us real pleasant, but she didn't have the hearty spirit nor the fun-devil of the other girls. She wasn't the disapproving kind—she was just different. And old Santiago that had walked from Chile to Dakota he fell in love with her at first blink in the same fashion. You take a man that will walk six thousand miles and can play the fiddle, and when he does fall in love he does it perfectly outrageous.

"On the other hand, that girl took some shine to Santiago. She was very modest about it, but I ketched her slippin' an eye his way more'n once, and one time when he spoke to her she mixed up the package she was fixin'.

"By this time the minister, he had shook hands with me.

"Now just make yourself at home, Mr. Saunders,' he says. 'And anything we can do for you we will.'

"So, findin' Santiago still busy talking to the snow girl, I picks me out as juicy

and snappy a little peach of a brunette as the place afforded and she and me had supper together.

"That girl had lots of fun flirtin' with me. It's proper to encourage the young, so I encouraged her in it.

"Finally she remarked what a strange-lookin' feller Santiago was, but how interesting!

"Yes,' I says, 'that young feller has got a little private history of his own that's all to his credit. Besides that, he can play the fiddle so as to make you love yourself to death.'

"Oh! Can he?' says the girl. 'I wish I could hear him play.'

"Well, you shall,' I says. 'Just excuse me for a minute.'

"So then I went down to Johnny-on-the-Spot's Fluid grocery-store and I asked Johnny for the loan of his fiddle. When I told Johnny I was goin' to take it to a Presbyterian festivity he used unkind words—some of 'em scarcely fit to print.

"Johnny, he didn't like no kind of a church, and first off he wasn't goin' to let me have the fiddle. I had to argue with him with one thumb in the back of his neck, and I left him rubbing the spot and wishing me things that, if they happened to me, would be hard luck.

"So then I sashays back to the bazaar with the fiddle under my arm and I told the minister that if he didn't object my young friend would give us some music. Then I told Santiago to cache the 'Ghost Dance' music and give us something human that the girls could understand.

"They had a piano in the place, for a tall lady with carpenter-shaving curls and a face too old for her age was goin' to sing 'Where is the Little Gipsy's Home?' and other sprightly coquettish pieces when supper was finished.

"Everybody clapped when the minister made his announcement that the young friend now present would kindly gratify the audience by playing on the violin. Then there was some difficulty about music, but my little brunette, she says to me: 'Come along,' and we scampered off to her house and come back with an armful of the stuff. Then there was some talk about who was to play the piano. Everybody seemed to think that Ora was the proper person. It turned out that Ora was the snow girl.

"She walked right up to the piano with-

out any excuse about her fingers bein' hoarse or havin' cramps in her feet or anything like that and simply asked Santiago if he could fiddle from piano music. He led her to believe he would make the effort, anyhow. So Ora treated the ivories nice for a little running start, and then old Santiago up with his bow and played for his life.

"That was one noble piece of music. I don't recall the name of it now, but it sure was loaded with beef. Everybody hollered for more when they quit, and I reckon the two of 'em worked away there for a full half-hour.

"Then Santiago, who always had good sense, smelled the fact that some of the young parties would like to dance, and slid out of playin' any more real nice and graceful, Spanish fashion.

"Ora got up from the piano, and my little Brunette grabbed a holt of me for the first waltz, which the minister was yankin' out in good shape.

"Me and my little Brunette we danced together most of the evening, although the rest of the girls was always flatterin' me by sayin' it wasn't fair, and that she was a mean thing, and the like of that.

"I kinder noticed that Santiago and the snow girl was together most of the time.

"When the music ended Santiago raised her hand, Spanish fashion, and kissed it. It was pretty, after the nice dancing, and all hands applauded.

"All the way home I had to listen to Santiago rave. 'There never was such a girl in this whole durn world,' and he was willing to prove it by firearms, by words, or by fiddle practise. There never was a man so much in love as he was; there never was such a night; and there never was such an' everything!

"'A little sleep will cool your fevered brow,' I said, and then Santiago was plumb disgusted with me.

"Well, sir, from that on he was up to town every odd minute.

"Now the girl's father ran a lumberyard. He was one of them unpleasant kind of Presbyterians that's very glad all the rest of us is damned. Not like the minister, who, if he honest believed we was goin' to hell, at least tried his best to make it pleasant before that unhappy event occurred.

"This here Allison, the snow girl's father, he hated the idee of enjoyments. The

girl's mother let her dance. Allison said dancing was the road to perdition.

"Naturally such a dad got fearfully and wonderfully sore on poor old Santiago, with his wild poetry and his frantic talk. It come to the point where he chased Santiago away from the house and told him to take his fiddle and never show his face inside their picket-fence again.

"Santiago come back to the ranch crushed to a wafer. He couldn't eat and he couldn't sleep. He just rolled one cigarette after another and smoked it.

"We took turns listenin' to him. There is always something kinder funny about a foreigner in love. At the same time, that poor cuss suffered fearful. I never saw anybody have the complaint worse. His cheeks sunk in and his eyes burned in his head.

"One day I says to myself, casual, bein' always able to converse that way without danger of an ugly come-back, I says: 'I wonder if something couldn't be done in this matter?'

"And with that I hit for town to get a squint at the girl. I swung off before their house and knocked at the door.

"The mother came out. She was the kind of woman that had had all her good looks and her spring and her fun in life put through the wringer of old Pop Allison's religious idee. She had been a beautiful woman once and had nice, lady-like manners.

"I made a quick figurin' to myself, and the answer was this—one woman was enough for any man to smash.

"Everybody knew my red head for five hundred miles around. Mrs. Allison, she was some surprised, but she said: 'Why! How do you do, Mr. Saunders; won't you step in?'

"So I stepped into the cool of the little parlor, with the shades drawn down and the nice, slippery sofa, and I put my hat on the floor and I begun to talk at once to Mrs. Allison before she got time to think.

"'But, Mr. Saunders, this young man isn't an American. We don't know anything about him—not even that he can earn a living,' she says.

"'Well,' I said, hoppin' for that part of the argument I could answer best, 'he pulls out forty a month at the ranch now.'

"'Oh, yes,' said she. 'But a man could hardly keep his wife at the ranch.'

"'It ain't the question of their gettin'

married yet,' I said. 'But why not let the young people just love each other? I tell you straight; while Santiago has got Spanish and Injun blood in him, he's as clean as a brook-pebble, so far as I know.'

"Well," said Mrs. Allison, quite flustered, 'that may be, but Ora is our only daughter, and you can imagine how I feel. Besides,' said she, 'he *does* play such queer music on his violin.'

"As for me," I says, 'I'd rather a man would play queer music well than ordinary music bad, on a violin or anything else, but that ain't really nothing against his character, Mrs. Allison.'

"And besides," she added, 'I couldn't do anything with Mr. Allison, anyhow.'

"I thought of some things I could do to Mr. Allison with great pleasure. His religion didn't go so far but what he could throw his hooks into you in a business deal. We bought some lumber from him at the ranch and it was at least one-quarter knot-holes, but the bill was sound and hearty. It was just as well that Mrs. Allison didn't hear what our superintendent told Allison in confidence.

"Well," I says, final, 'do you object to my seein' the young lady for a minute, Mrs. Allison?'

"Certainly not," said she, and she went in the hall and called, 'Ora!'

The snow girl came in. The delicate blood came to her cheeks when she saw who it was, and her hand went to her heart.

"Mr. Saunders wants to talk to you a minute, my dear," said Mrs. Allison, who, I guessed, was willing to stand in on the play if she could square it with her conscience—and with Allison—because she instantly left the room.

"I took a hold of little Ora's hand.

"Do you like Santiago?" I asked.

"Amador," she corrected me.

"Well, Amador then," says I. 'Do you like him?'

"She looked at me very steady, and her lips hardly moved when she answered me, 'I do.'

"I hitched up closer to her.

"You really want him, do you?'

"And again she answered me, 'I do.'

"Well," I says, 'I'll make you a little bet that you get him.'

"Then the blood come to her face for fair.

"I rode away from that house thinkin'

hard. It's easy enough to tell a girl what I did, but there's difficulties when it comes to makin' the play real.

"All I was sayin' to myself on the way back to the ranch was 'How the devil? How the devil? How the devil?'

"Well, sir, no man can do anything unless chance is willing to help him. You can't dig out gold where there ain't any gold, no matter how hard you work.

"So for one month I was up against one of these here frosts that takes hold of your vitals and turns 'em into icicles. Not only I couldn't get a plan, but I couldn't see any place to put a plan when I got it. The darn thing didn't have any ends to it that a man could get hold of.

"Here's a wildcat fiddler, with Injun and Spanish blood in him, all the way from Chile, with no religion that anybody ever heard of except the violin, and no money, and no hopes of gettin' any; and here's the most proper raised little girl, with more religion than was good for anybody, pure white blood in her, and prospects of plenty of cash.

"What do you think about it, anyhow, Foster?" I asked.

"I think you're a meddlesome old jackass," says he 'that's always gettin' himself into places where nothing but his pure damn stupidity would ever get him out.'

"He was an educated man, Foster, and I used to love to hear him abuse me.

"I waited for a plan until I got peevish, and then I says to Santiago: 'You don't *really* want that girl.'

"I don't?" says poor Santiago, all up in the air. 'Why, what do you mean?'

"If you wanted her," I said, 'you'd go and take her.'

"But," he says, 'Señor Allison is right! I am a nothing. I have no money, I have no familee, partly I am Injun; all that I'm good for is to play some on the fiddle.'

"Well, see here," I says. 'Would you get up and hustle if you could get that girl, Santiago?'

"He waved one hand in the air.

"Red," he said, 'I tell you true; these feet of mine, I'd walk them off to my knees. These hands of mine, I'd wear them off to my elbows for the sake of that lady who I love. I do not speak foolishness about dying for her, because that would be very easy; but yes, I will work for her, like a man.'



"'Good!' says I. 'You *talk* like a man, anyhow.'

"So then I thinks about the Presbyterian minister playin' the piano, and it just comes to me he may have a drop of sporty blood in his veins.

"His name was Pettigrew, which sounds like something that has done its developin' in a kind of small way, but the pair of scales that wouldn't give Brother Pettigrew two hundred pounds was made for no honest purpose.

"I just reckoned I'd hump along and see Brother Pettigrew on the quiet. Him and me had a little talk. When I mentioned Brother Allison he raised one hand and put the other on my knee.

"'Mr. Saunders,' he said, 'I'll tell you this: I do not feel—inasmuch as Mr. Allison is one of my elders—that it is fair for me to say what I really think of him. I only remark, in passing, that I do not like cheats; and more, concerning young people,' says he, and here his eye lit up. (You want a nice, big, round-faced man, with large teeth and stiff hair, to get into a romance. The more roast beef they eat for dinner the more they love romance). 'Concerning young people, it seems to me the *only* reason why they should marry is *love*, Mr. Saunders—just that.'

"I shook him by the hand.

"'You're damn right,' I said. 'And now I want to whisper to you.'

"When I left that big, stout minister you'd have thought I was his long-lost brother.

"Finally I got a note from a kid on horseback. The next day I says to Santiago: 'There's goin' to be a Sunday-school picnic down by the river. Let's you and me go, Santiago; Ora and that nice little brunette girl are goin' to be there.'

"Poor old Santiago shook his head.

"'Why shall I, to make myself the more meeserable?' he asked. 'I am not happy here, true! But to see that which your heart desires to breaking and not be able to even hope to have it, that is a strong pain.'

"'Ah, gwan!' said I. 'Clean up your hat, put on a clean shirt, and come along.'

"So off we went to the picnic.

"It was a durn nice picnic. All the girls come rushin' out, perfectly shameless, and put their arms around my neck and petted me and flattered me until I was fit

to bust; and it was Mr. Saunders here and Mr. Saunders there, and Red here and Red there until I was pretty near the whole works; but I liked it—you bet. And they played kissin' games, and they had ice-cream and lemonade and cake, and, of course, Bob Shore, the fat lawyer, he had to sit down on the pie and kinder act retired for the rest of the day, and the usual bunch of kids found the hornets' nests and brought some along with 'em, as is usual with picnics. But, honest to gosh, it was a real nice old-time party. Then by and by came the time when nobody knew just what to do, and nobody wanted to start for home yet.

"The minister flagged me, and I says: 'Why not have a mock wedding to wind up the festivities?'

"And all the girls they hollered 'Yes! Yes! Yes!' And the boys they thought that 'd be kind of fun, too.

"So me and the minister and the old maiden lady with the carpenter-shaving curls and the fat lady with the beamin' smile, who always goes to picnics, we hustled the kids around and taught 'em how to act, and all the boys was joshin' each other and everything was merry.

"But who should be bride and groom?

"Well, the girls, out of compliment, picked me first for the part. They said I look so picturesque.

"So I proposed to the nice fat old lady with the beamin' smile, goin' down on my knee, while the crowd hollered and laughed.

"And she said she regretted that she'd have to turn me down, but she had been married twice already, and one of 'em was still alive and present, so that faded away.

"Then I caught hold of Santiago by the shoulder and I says: 'Here's a wild man that ought to be tamed. Let him play bridegroom.'

"Poor Santiago didn't like to be made the goat before his girl, but he was that kind of feller that if you were his friend you could do any durn thing to him you liked. So, while he got red in the face, he didn't kick, but simply waited for what was goin' to happen to him.

"Then the minister he threw his card into the play.

"'What a splendid contrast!' says he, and he grabs a hold of little Ora and matches her up to Santiago.

"Now there's one law that's got all old Moses ever pulled off skinned to a skele-



ton, and that is, you can't gig back on the minister at a Sunday-school picnic.

"So whiles Allison glared sour enough to spoil milk at a hundred yards, he had to keep his trap shut. The minister, he backed away and looked at them.

"What a splendid contrast!" he says again. "Isn't it, Mrs. Allison?"

"And Mrs. Allison she said 'Yes, it was a splendid contrast.'

"I don't know whether she thought so or not, but that's what she said.

"As for Santiago, I can't imagine a man goin' through anything nearer hell than he was. Here was the thing that cuddled to the roots of his soul made a joke of before five hundred people. That, son, is something that tries a man out.

"Santiago took his punishment like an officer and a gentleman.

"In the mean time, unnoticed by the rest, I slips the minister a plain gold ring. So the ceremony went on from 'Who makes a present of this woman to this man,' all the way through the rigmarole, with the bridesmaids and the whole shoot-in' match gigglin' and thinkin' it was a lovely joke, until finally the minister, he raises his hands and pronounces them man and wife. 'Then,' says he, 'it is my duty and pleasure to salute the bride.' So he kisses little Ora.

"It ain't my duty," says I, "but it certainly is goin' to be my pleasure to salute the bride," so I kissed little Ora, and then half a dozen other fellers kissed little Ora.

"And just about this time old man Allison kinder smelled something, like the fox he was. He walks up to the minister and says: 'This has a very serious look to me, sir.'

"Marriage has its serious side," says the minister easy.

"Do you mean to say they are married?" yells Allison.

"According to the laws of the land," says the minister, still smiling pleasant.

"You're a damned old scoundrel!" says Allison, and makes for him.

"The minister grabbed the hand he punched with, took him by the back of the neck, and shook him in a vigorously Christian fashion.

"Don't get abusive, Mr. Allison," he said. "Remember you're an elder of my church."

"Perhaps Allison wasn't abusive, but he

sounded like it. So the minister just marched him out by the back of his neck and talked to him like a father. Anyways, Allison come back, not exactly pleased, but not sayin' anything.

"In the mean time the two poor kids didn't know what had happened to 'em. Santiago was as white as the girl that stood beside him.

"Is this true, Red?" he asked me. "That we're married?"

"Sure," says I.

"And then the little girl got hold of me.

"Is it *really* true?" she said.

"It certainly is," I told her.

"Then they forgot all about the rest of us and clinched, and the old maiden lady with carpenter-shaving curls and the old, beamin' fat lady they cried and said it was so pretty! And Mrs. Allison, she cried and kinder cuddled her little girl up to her as soon as she could get to her. And Santiago, him bein' a foreigner, he just naturally cried, too.

"Well, we had to get back to the ranch, so I told Santiago to kiss his bride good-by and hop along.

"The little lad all of a sudden drew a kind of dignity.

"Just one moment, please," says he, and walks straight up to Allison. Says he:

"Señor Allison, in this play I had no part, but now that it is played, I have a part. What I have, that I shall keep; what I can do, what I have hands and brain and heart to do, for this your daughter that I have married, that I will do. Please to believe that, sir."

Allison looked at him a minute, and there must have been a good streak in the man somewhere, for he held out his hand. He was too mixed up to know what he was sayin', but anything goes on an occasion like that.

"So he shook Santiago by the hand and said: 'Pleased to meet you.'

"The bad place was over for the rest of 'em, but I had to listen to Santiago all the way back to the ranch.

"Sure he made good! Nothing great—he don't want to be nothing great—but he got a job with the Hail Insurance Company and he gave fiddle lessons in his spare time, and with one thing and another he and Mrs. Santiago and the kid eat three square meals a day, wear clothes, and have a place to sleep. What more can you get out of life?"

# The Stage

## The Mystery of Success

by Burns Mantle

**T**HOUGH the theatrical world is peopled with angels, one would not ordinarily think of accusing the producing managers of a desire to emulate the methods of the Deity. Yet this year their one absorbing ambition has been to move in mysterious ways their wonders to perform.

Everything that could be done to keep the nature of their plans a secret has been done. Play scripts with the slightest suggestion of novelty have been kept locked within the inner recesses of the office safe. Conferences with authors and stage-directors have been held behind carefully closed doors. And rehearsals have been as closely guarded as the meetings of strategy boards in Europe.

The erstwhile boastful manager who stopped you in your Broadway tracks to tell you fully the story of his latest find now greets you with hushed tones and mysterious winks.

"Sh-h-h! I have a new play! By a new playwright! But—come closer—I can't tell you anything about it! Not here! You understand! We are rehearsing in a vault below the subway! Sh-h-h! Come down if you like—but, remember! Not a word!"

Mystery—deep, dark, fascinating, and

profound—has been the watchword of the new season.

There are at least two reasons for this sudden spasm of secrecy. The more immediate cause may be traced to the early beginnings of last season. Then, as you may recall, practically every producing manager in New York had a white slave play either in his desk or in rehearsal. And each of them was eager to be the first in the field.

The early birds in this instance stirred the sated worms and reaped the rewards of so much of a sensation as the new and daringly outspoken drama created. Those who followed were accepted as imitators and suffered the consequences. For with the novelty gone an eminently sane play-going public soon refused to be either thrilled or entertained by that type of play.

This season, when all signs pointed to a rush of melodrama to meet the natural war-time demand for forceful plays, the producing managers recalled their experiences of last autumn and promptly began to hedge their movements with as much mystery as possible.

There is, however, a deeper and more significant cause for the prevailing order of secrecy. Not only is the unexpected thrill, the well-planned surprise, the very life-blood of melodrama, but, after years and



JEANNE EAGLES, WHO IS TO BE JULIAN ELTINGE'S LEADING WOMAN THIS SEASON IN "THE CRINOLINE GIRL," IS A KANSAS CITY CONTRIBUTION TO THE STAGE. SHE IS BLOND, PRETTY, AND HAS SOME REPUTATION AS A TANGOIST

*From a photograph by Sarony, New York*



DESMOND KELLY MIGHT REASONABLY BE CALLED A "HELPLESS" ACTRESS. LAST SEASON SHE HELPED SAVE THE HEROINE IN "HELP WANTED," AND THIS SEASON SHE IS TO HELP THE HERO IN THE NEW COMEDY, "WANTED, \$22,000."

BY A. E. THOMAS AND CLAYTON HAMILTON

*From her latest photograph by White, New York*

years of costly experience the providers of plays have also made the belated discovery that too much publicity is a dangerous thing.

In other words, they have at last learned that in place of inspiring curiosity their press-agents have only too often killed it, robbing practically every play presented of that element of surprise which should be its chief asset.

Added to these there has been that most impressive of all arguments—an ocular demonstration. Nothing has quite the

same effect on the average theatrical manager as the sight of a rival's success.

When "On Trial" was brought into New York, late in August, an absolutely unknown play by an equally unknown author—a youthful lawyer named Elmer L. Reizenstein—and scored an overnight success of sensational proportions, every manager who had previously been doing his best to mask his early-season plans became more secretive than ever. For here was proof beyond dispute that secrecy was profitable.



FOLLOWING UP THE SUCCESS SHE EARNED LAST SEASON WITH HER SPLENDID REVIVAL OF "LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN," MARGARET ANGLIN WILL THIS YEAR TAKE THAT BRILLIANT PLAY OF OSCAR WILDE'S ON TOUR

*From her latest photograph by White, New York*





LILY CAHILL CAME OUT OF THE WEST LAST YEAR TO PLAY 'ASENATH IN "JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS."  
LATER SHE WENT TO BOSTON TO CREATE THE LEAD IN "UNDER COVER," A PART  
SHE IS STILL PLAYING, THOUGH NOW IN NEW YORK

*From a photograph by White, New York*

After that memorable incident wild horses could not drag the plot of a new play from the keeping of its prospective producers, nor all the lure of flattery coax it from their tightly sealed lips.

the imminent production of "The Bludgeon," glared threateningly at any one who hinted at a desire to know the theme of the new play.

Mr. Owen Davis, then rehearsing "Cor-



MARILYNN MILLER IS THE NEWEST OF THE YOUNG WOMEN OF THE STAGE TO FOLLOW THE PATH BLAZED BY CISSIE LOFTUS, ELSIE JANIS, AND INA CLAIRE. SHE DANCES AND SHE GIVES IMITATIONS IN "THE PASSING SHOW OF 1914"

*From a photograph by White, New York*

Mr. Bayard Veiller, who succeeded wonderfully with "Within the Law" and suffered much with "The Fight," walked the back streets for fear of being cajoled into revealing the story of his newest melodrama.

Mr. Paul Armstrong, having announced

nered," gave daily hints from headquarters to the members of a trembling company that upon their conversational discretion depended their jobs.

Within a week Broadway was as barren of dependable news of the approaching new plays as are the reports of foreign war cor-



MADGE KENNEDY'S STAGE CAREER HAS BEEN SHORT BUT PLEASANT. HER FIRST EXPERIENCE WAS WITH NAT GOODWIN IN "THE GENIUS," HER SECOND IN "OVER NIGHT," HER THIRD AS "LITTLE MISS BROWN," AND NOW SHE IS THE HEROINE OF "TWIN BEDS"

*From a photograph—copyrighted by Maffett, Chicago*

respondents of the real movements of troops. And that profitable conspiracy of silence still continues.

Just how much the surprise of "On Trial" contributed to its success it is, of course, quite impossible to say. But it at

least was responsible for the unusual action of a delighted audience which, proud of its discovery, remained in the theater after the final curtain had fallen the first night and refused to leave until it had paid its compliments to the author.



FRANCES STAMFORD, BEING QUITE YOUNG, IS A COMPARATIVE NEWCOMER TO THE STAGE. LAST SEASON WITH "THE FIGHT," THIS SUMMER SHE PLAYED A STOCK COMPANY ENGAGEMENT IN CLEVELAND, AND SHE IS NOW WITH "UNDER COVER" IN CHICAGO

*From a photograph by White, New York*



LILLIAN LORRAINE, LATELY A FEATURED MEMBER OF "THE WHIRL OF THE WORLD" COMPANY, IS SAID TO HAVE MADE A FORTUNATE ESCAPE FROM PARIS LAST SUMMER, HER EAGER ENTHUSIASM UNIMPAIRED AND A BRAND NEW REPERTOIRE OF FRENCH GOWNS IN HER TRUNKS

*From a photograph by White, New York*



He had been sitting in an upper box, a pale youth in his early twenties. And when he was urged forward by his friends, he arose timidly and made a frightened little speech of thanks that carried no farther than the six or eight rows of seats directly below him. But though he never wrote anotheractable play, he may forever glory in this one moment of triumph. For it was spontaneously tendered and it was all his.

"On Trial" has proved, too, that there is only one really essential law in constructive dramaturgy—and that one to interest an audience. The plot of this play moves backward in place of forward, yet without sacrificing an interest that is markedly cumulative. In other words, it follows the form of a photo-play in which one of the characters relates a story to his companions at a club. As he proceeds, the story he is telling is enacted on the screen, going back sometimes many years to the point of inception.

The first episode in "On Trial" is a court scene in which a confessed murderer is being tried. When the first witness for the State is placed on the stand and begins the recital of what occurred the night of the crime, she being the wife of the murdered man, the court-room is suddenly blotted out, and when the lights are again turned up the incidents related by the witness are being acted. At the end of the act the scene is changed back to the court-room just as she is concluding her testimony.

In the same way, at the beginning of the second act, the little daughter of the murderer starts to tell the jury of what occurred at her home the night her papa left hurriedly to meet the man who was afterward killed, and the changing scene takes up the recital and carries it through.

Finally the motive for the crime is uncovered when, in illustrating the testimony of the murderer's wife, who had mysteriously disappeared the night of the crime and been found again, the action is carried back thirteen years and establishes an intimacy between the murdered man and the wife of his murderer that years later was responsible for the shooting.

The last scene of all, in the nature of an epilogue, reveals the jury-room during the final balloting. The vote is eleven for acquittal and one for conviction on the law

and the confession. Back to the court-room, then, for the introduction of new evidence that shall clear the conscience of the stubborn juror and convince him that the killing, under the unwritten law at least, was justifiable.

There is no discounting the interest of the audiences in this play. Their eagerness to be in their seats at the beginning of each new act is something of a revelation. For that reason we are probably safe in predicting that it is but the forerunner of a dozen similarly constructed dramas. It sets the new fashion of a new season, and never has there been a manager who had not rather be out of the business entirely than to be out of fashion.

#### THE NOVELTY OF "INNOCENT"

It was, according to the gossip of the hour, the approach of a drama entitled "Innocent"—*Innocent* being the name, but not the nature of the heroine—that caused the *première* of "On Trial" to be so carefully shrouded in mystery.

"Innocent," it was reported, also had a plot that proceeded with crablike grace from conclusion to beginning rather than the other way about, and the promoters of "On Trial" knowing this, were eager to lead rather than to follow it into the lime-light. When "Innocent" was produced, however, its form and setting were found to be unusual only to this extent: The principal male character commits suicide in a prologue, leaving a journal of his unhappy life to be read by his best friend. The friend begins the reading, there is a change of scene, the dead man comes to life two years younger and many times as happy as he had appeared at his death, and assists in acting out the scenes that led to his taking his own life.

The form, you may see, is almost identical with that used by Edward Sheldon in "Romance," in which a reminiscent grandfather told the story of his romantic past to his nephew and it was revealed in the acted drama as he proceeded.

"Innocent" being a startling and not a pleasant play, will have to depend largely upon the sensation it may create for its success. There is but one woman in the cast, she being the beautiful Pauline Frederick. In the play she is the illegitimate daughter of a dissolute adventurer dying in Manchuria. He calls her *Inno-*

cent because, knowing the taint in her blood, he has kept her from all contact with the world, where temptations might assail her.

At his demise he leaves her in the care of a friend and warns the friend of the grave responsibility of keeping her always away from the lure of luxury, lights, and laughter. But the girl pleads earnestly and successfully to be taken away from Manchuria. She demands her individual right to live life at its fullest if she so elects. They go first to Budapest, and here *Innocent's* wildest dreams become realities and her most exotic impulses her ruling passions. She deliberately drags her guardian into the whirlpool with her. When his money is gone she deserts him, and when after tortuous months of searching he finds her the contented mistress of another, he returns to the scene of the drama's inception in Manchuria and kills himself.

The novelty of the resurrected hero seemed neither to add to nor detract from the interest the drama inspired. It was the story itself that either interested or irritated, according to the taste of its auditor.

#### THE PILGRIMS' FAVORITE MELODRAMA

The mystery of success enters somewhat into the history of another early-season venture, a play written by Roi Cooper Megrue and called "Under Cover." Produced originally in Boston last season, it proved the pilgrims' favorite melodrama. They preferred it even to the universally popular "Within the Law," which played against it. For five months they crowded the theater to applaud it.

This season "Under Cover" was simultaneously revealed to the somewhat impatient citizens of New York and Chicago, and in neither city was the Boston excitement repeated. It may have been the general depression following the shock of war, and it may have been because the tricks of surprise and suspense so freely employed in the modern melodrama are already beginning to grow stale. We have had a fairly liberal dose of the police and their methods in dealing with a varied assortment of criminals during the past four or five seasons, and I suspect we are beginning to tire of them a bit.

"Under Cover" goes to the custom-house for its story. A grafting deputy col-

lector who is on the trail of a gifted smuggler furnishes the web of the plot, and a society girl forced into his employ as a spy weaves the romance when she discovers the smuggler to be the very young man with whom she had fallen in love in Paris.

The girl is forced to betray her lover, but her rewards are greater than she suspected. He is not a smuggler, it turns out, but a secret-service agent pretending to be a smuggler in order to trap the grafters, which he does to much applause in the last act.

#### WAR DRAMAS ARE NEUTRAL

In the new season's slight list toward war plays the President's plea for a genuine neutrality has been carefully observed. Audiences have applauded the valor and heroism of military personages, but have been uncommonly decent in avoiding anything resembling a display of racial prejudice.

The annual spectacle at the Hippodrome, frankly entitled "Wars of the World," is entirely free of any scene or comment bearing on or appertaining to the European mix-up. It is a series of wonderful pictorial episodes beginning with the establishment of Rome as the mistress of the world and proceeding in historical sequence through the war for religion that sent the Crusaders forth, the war of mass against class that pitted the citizens and citizenesses of France against the aristocrats, and the war of brother against brother that cemented a divided American republic in 1865.

By way of a pleasant interlude the entertainment takes up the "war of sport," picturing Harvard's conquering of the English crew at Henley; drifts back again to a "war of races," when the French fought the Arabs, and on down to that modern skirmish, a "war for humanity," the same being our own recent march into Mexico. During this episode a company of American jackies, running down the aisles of the huge theater, scale the footlights and drive a mob of Mexican "snipers" from a square in Vera Cruz. The conclusion is elaborately and peacefully pictorial, as usual, a group of very wet but still charming choristers arising from the Hippodrome tank as so many blooming pond Lilies—and Rubies and Maudes.

"The Story of the Rosary" is a war play, but though England's gallant red-

coats supply both hero and villain, there is no mention of the enemy's nationality. The war here is rather of cousin against cousin, one being an honest youth who, on the eve of battle, marries a princess—marries her in spite of her father's sneering refusal to sanction the ceremony, in spite of his own poverty, and very much in spite of the other cousin's schemes to prevent.

The hero then goes to war, is arrested as a deserter, released and placed at the head of his regiment, wounded and found missing at roll-call. Meantime the princess, giving him up for good, plans to enter a convent, and is about to take her final vows when who should dash back home again but the missing soldier, still wearing the rosary that she had given him, dear heart, the day he rode away.

"The Dragon's Claw," which lasted but a week in New York, also breathed the spirit and pictured the terrors of war, and it might, by an extravagant stretching of the imagination, have been said to favor the Allies. The story was of the Boxer uprising in China in 1900, when two hundred foreigners were besieged in the British legation at Peking and finally rescued by the combined forces of America, England, Germany, Russia, France, and Japan.

This melodrama had the advantage of being unusually well played, the stalwart Charles Waldron being the hero and the personable Gladys Hanson playing opposite him as the misunderstood wife, while the comedy fell to that veteran of many seasons, Frederic de Belleville. But evidently Henry Miller, who staged the play, or Austin Strong, who wrote it, was too ruthless in stripping it of most of the bombast and fustian that go with such pieces. The mechanical scenes of pumped-up excitement stood out rather baldly against the sane and clear-cut dialogue and carefully defined characters, creating a query: Can the pictorial melodrama be well written and well played and still survive in the theaters of the best class? Or must it hold to that consistent mediocrity that has given it both its success and its classification among plays?

#### "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE"

The laughter plays of the early season were as numerous and as trivial as usual. The mystery of success in laughter plays, however, is not discovered in the pro-

ducer's secrecy concerning their form, but rather in the public's unexpected and entirely unreliable interest in their disclosures. The best, theoretically, will frequently languish while the worst romps on to success. And so far no one has been able to explain exactly why.

Out of the first group "It Pays to Advertise" rises as the most characteristic and most positive success. Filled with the familiar tricks of the modern "snappy" farce, it still is so well balanced in basic human values and so perfectly cast that it cheers the heart and diverts the mind at the same operation.

The story of the idle rich man's son and father's effort to make something of him is reasonably familiar. In this instance the father's plan takes on the form of a minor conspiracy. He wagers his stenographer, a personable young woman who has attracted the attention of the young man, that she cannot induce him to give up idling and go to work.

She accepts the wager, encourages the youth's sentimental interest in her, and then has herself brutally "fired" by father. The son, with the pity that is akin to love, promptly takes her part and for her sake agrees to show papa that all rich men's sons are not pinheads.

Father being a soap magnate, son naturally turns to that business, and under the inspiring optimism of a former theatrical press-agent who believes with all his heart and soul and amazing nerve that it pays to advertise, they establish themselves as rivals of the soap trust and literally flood the country, or father's part of the country at least, with their advertisements. Their campaign is perfect, but the results promise disaster. In all the excitement they have forgotten to manufacture any soap. The complications are of the occasionally forced but usually unexpected variety, culminating in the trust being forced as a matter of self-protection to buy the trademark of the invaders.

A unique and extremely effective feature of the brisk dialogue of "It Pays to Advertise" is the use of the real names of those advertisers who have spent millions to make millions, and the actual figures of their annual magazine and newspaper budgets. Perhaps the heartiest laugh is aroused by the young promoter's argument that the only reason we eat hen's eggs instead of duck eggs is traceable directly to

advertising. When the hen lays an egg she is proud and quick to advertise it, while the duck, following the same achievement, preserves a "conservative" silence.

The farce was written by Walter Hackett and Roi Cooper Megrue, but because it was produced by the Messrs. Cohan & Harris most of the professional reviewers credited young Mr. Cohan with at least a "moral" influence at rehearsals. Grant Mitchell, who last season was the widow's son in "Years of Discretion," plays the idler reformed; Will Deming is the promoter, Ruth Shepley the scheming stenographer, J. W. Cope the father, and Louise Drew an alert adventuress. Each of the five scored unmistakably, and I call attention to them in a spirit of gratitude. They gave the best performance of farce I have sat through in ten years.

#### TWO FROHMAN PLAYS FROM FRANCE

The matter of properly casting a play is becoming increasingly important. Charles Frohman, for instance, has, for me, deliberately reduced the interest he might have aroused with "The Beautiful Adventure" by casting Charles Cherry in the rôle of a youthful lover. That Mr. Cherry is an attractive and experienced lover is granted, but he passed the age of thoughtless and impulsive romance some seasons back.

"The Beautiful Adventure" is the French comedy to which reference was recently made in an account of the Paris season—the story of the bride who deserts at the altar the cold and practical lover her guardians have provided for her and elopes with the sweetheart of her youth. Immediately they are plunged into some embarrassing complications by the girl's grandmother, who mistakes them for the duly elected bride and groom and promptly arranges their domestic affairs to suit herself.

Mrs. Thomas Whiffen plays the grandmother by way of making her farewell to a stage she has adorned for forty odd years. In that ingratiating rôle she has achieved the expected personal triumph. Pretty Ann Murdock plays the girl, and by a modest and telling performance has advanced herself leagues on her way toward stardom. One man, however, was shocked by "The Beautiful Adventure." He was Anthony Comstock. He asked that the performances be stopped by the police. But they weren't.

John Drew's new play, "The Prodigal Husband," is also from Mr. Frohman's French list. Dario Niccodemi, its original author, is even now at the front with his regiment. Michael Morton made the English adaptation.

As "The Prodigal Husband" Mr. Drew is several kinds of a man. First, a sportively inclined gentleman with a taste for wine and late hours. Having quarreled with his wife, whom he considered an irritating saint, he has lived apart from her for several years, trying to drown a memory of her in dissipation. His reformation begins with his adoption of the orphaned daughter of his *concierge*.

Six years later the little girl has grown to womanhood, and Mr. Drew, irritated by the gossips who suspect him of having assumed an unduly intimate relationship to his pretty ward, seeks to defy them by eloping with the girl with the intention of marrying her when he is freed by the divorce courts.

So impassioned is his plea that he frightens the child and she runs to the first wife for protection. Mr. Drew follows her, and a reconciliation with the wife takes place, the happy little ward gaining two guardians in place of the one she all but lost. It is not as pleasantly innocuous as most of the Drew comedies, but promises to serve him for a season. He has three leading ladies this year—Helen Hayes Brown as the little girl of twelve, Jessie Glendenning as the young woman of eighteen, and Grace Carlyle as the patient *Penelope* who finally welcomes the prodigal husband home.

#### EARLY-SEASON FARCES

Margaret Mayo's oddly named "Twin Beds" is definitely placed among the farce-comedy successes because of the originality of its idea and the smartness of its dialogue. It appeals particularly to flat-dwellers, perhaps, because of the main complication—that of a man's coming home to a new apartment-building considerably the worse for having been out too long, and getting not only into the wrong apartment, but likewise into the wrong twin bed. Not only are the apartments fashioned exactly alike, but their respective bedrooms are furnished similarly, so that the situation is fairly plausible.

Add to this situation the fact that the befuddled gentleman is an opera singer,



that he is married to a watchful and jealous wife, and that he has been innocently flirting with the lady into whose apartment he wanders, and the resulting complications are easily pictured. When he tries to get out without being seen he can't find his clothes. The maid has taken them to the tailor's to be pressed. He appropriates another suit, but leaves it on a chair, and she takes that also. And so on till the usual explanatory finish.

There is originality, too, in the main situation of "The Third Party," which was tried last spring in Chicago and is now numbered with the lighter plays of the New York season sufficiently attractive to linger for a creditable run. The gentleman of the title is a youth who volunteers to act as a professional chaperon to a mixed couple dining alone in a French restaurant noted for its accommodating management rather than its social standing. Discovered by the wife of the gentleman whose friend he has pretended to be, the chaperon is carried bodily away to the latter's country home, there to be brought face to face with his own *fiancée*. Result: Three acts of comic alarums, Walter Jones and Taylor Holmes being the excited principals.

#### WITH YOUTH AT THE PROW

Just as though they had hit upon the idea at the same time, Byron Ongley, Emil Nyitray, George Scarborough, and Philip Bartholomae have agreed that this is to be a season in which youth in the drama is to be especially well served. As a result Mr. Ongley and Mr. Nyitray offer "He Comes Up Smiling," with Douglas Fairbanks as the hero. Mr. Scarborough presents "What Is Love?" with Alice Brady as the puzzled heroine, and Mr. Bartholomae "Miss Daisy," with quite a crowd of eager, but professionally obscure youngsters.

Of the three "What Is Love?" is the most unique. Superficial and trivial as it may sound, there is still a rather serious note struck by the interrogatory theme of this comedy. It is the heroine who propounds the query, and no one is able to answer it to her satisfaction. Yet she is very anxious to know. She is at the most important crisis of her life and she stands between the claims of two lovers. One is her accepted *fiancé*, a solid young citizen of the practical, unemotional type. The

other the sweetheart of her youth, suddenly returned from a three-year stay abroad and still wildly in love with her. Upon her decision between the two, she feels, hangs either a great happiness or a lifetime of bitterness and regret.

All her advisers agree that she should marry for love—but what is love? She was sure she loved *John* before *Robert* returned. Her sentimental sister-in-law offers one explanation. She will thrill with the kisses of her true love, says she, but remain passive under those of any other. As there was a thrill in the welcoming kiss of *Robert*, and there have been none in the chaste salutes of *John*, the signs seem to favor *Robert*. Still she is a girl of honor, and she has given her word to *John*! So she wavers until the final curtain, and then suddenly begs her release from *John* and goes happily to the arms of *Robert*.

The protectors of the young person will probably discover an insidious influence at work in this comedy and condemn it for that reason. And not without cause. The test of kisses is not exactly one generally to be recommended. But there is no reason to deny Mr. Scarborough praise for having written a bright little play and to encourage him along this line. His previous bid to fame, you may recall, was that pornographic triumph, "The Lure."

In "He Comes Up Smiling," the bubbling Douglas Fairbanks's new play, we have a modern romance set attractively and developed with an engaging charm, if not always with convincing logic. He is a victim of the wanderlust, this youth—wanderlust and an amazing nerve. On one of his overland excursions he takes a dip in a lake. On emerging he misses his own clothes and appropriates those of a youthful stock-broker who is also in the water. Returning to the automobile of the latter, the irresponsible youth is contentedly imagining himself the owner of the car when a second automobile party, including the fascinating daughter of another Wall Street broker, hails him. He offers one of the cards he finds in his new clothes. They recognize the name as that of a famous plunger, a rival in "the Street," and finally kidnap him to "keep him away from business for a week."

At the end of the third act Douglas, grown honorable and ambitious, confesses and leaves them to make good on his own account and for the sake of the girl. By



the middle of the fourth he has made a million dollars, bought a motor-car and a dress suit, engaged a valet, and returned to claim her.

There is a certain novelty of setting in Mr. Bartholomae's contribution, "Miss Daisy." The heroine, arriving home from a dancing-party, is undressed and put to bed by her maid. Immediately she falls asleep and dreams of the party. Following the new fashion in play construction, the scene here is also cleverly changed to represent the ballroom. The story of her dream, in which she meets a visiting prince, is acted. The dream scene, however, ends with the first act, and the plot, including the prince, is carried forward from that point in conventional fashion.

#### "THE MIRACLE MAN" AS A PLAY

George M. Cohan, the mystery of whose success may be popularly traced to the space between his eyebrows and the roots of his prematurely gray hair, has a way of relying very considerably upon his own judgment. When he dramatized Earl Derr Biggers's story, "Seven Keys to Baldpate," not even his intimates knew the form into which he had cast it until the play was put in rehearsal. He adopted the same course with Frank L. Packard's "The Miracle Man," which the experts have declared to be the most unusual play of the season in New York.

Mr. Cohan was one of the first to recognize the exceptional dramatic possibilities of this story when it was printed originally in MUNSEY'S for February, 1914. Immediately he put aside other work and began making it into a play. And as he worked on it something of the power of faith that is its theme took hold of him. He frankly has declared it to be the most important effort of his career.

No reader of the Packard story will have difficulty in recalling it. It is not the type of yarn that it is easy to forget. Its principal characters are strongly silhouetted against a novel background—*Doc Madison*, the urbane confidence man; *Helena*, his girl, proud of her expertness in the one-time metropolitan diversions of the "panel" and "badger" games; *Pale Face Harry*, who sniffed opium; *Michael Coogan*, alias the *Flopper*, who could so distort his body as to wring alms from the most reluctant of "boobs"; and the *Patriarch*, a gentle old man who for forty

years had been healing the minds and bodies of his neighbors with such success that not a single physician had been able to make a living in the community.

It was *Doc Madison's* wily scheme, you will remember, to place *Helena* in the *Patriarch's* home as his long-lost grand-niece from Pennsylvania; to import *Pale Face Harry* and the *Flopper* as sham pilgrims to be miraculously cured and widely advertised, and then to collect the contributions that would be showered upon the healer by a curious and credulous and grateful American public.

But as a miracle of miracles the crooks were themselves regenerated. The very day the *Flopper* was effectively straightened out little *Eddie Holmes*, who had used a crutch all his life, threw it away with a glad cry and walked unassisted across the *Patriarch's* lawn. The *Doc* had reckoned without the real power of the faith on which he had based his whole scheme.

Quite reasonably it was thought Mr. Cohan would take the assembling of the crooks in their New York "roost" for the first act of the play, but to the surprise of many he elected to begin the proceedings in the rooms reserved by *Doc Madison* in the village hotel close to the *Patriarch's* home. Here the scheme is outlined, and here the *Patriarch* himself, whom the dramatist has given a voice, makes his first rather impressive entrance.

The second act is at the *Patriarch's* shrine, and ends with the sensational healing of the lame boy, a powerful dramatic climax. The third act emphasizes the gradual regeneration of the crooks and ends with the death of the *Patriarch*, and the fourth act completes the story. *Doc Madison* is the last to give in, and this he does both through love of *Helena* and his awakened belief in the satisfaction of living honestly. Thus, though the *Patriarch* has passed, his influence lives after him.

Personally I am inclined to believe Mr. Cohan would have obtained a more telling distribution of dramatic climaxes if he had followed the story more closely by beginning the play at the "roost" and ending it with the death of the *Patriarch*. The prevailing interest in it, however, would seem to indicate that the public is thoroughly satisfied, and that, as Brander Matthews might say to Clayton Hamilton, is the ultimate test.

# W A R

BY EMMA LEE WALTON



MARY sat by the front window, crouched down on the window-seat, watching. Her eyes were red with recent tears, but she spoke bravely and without a tremor to some one in the other room.

"There are some boys out here playing tag," she said with a poor imitation of a laugh. "One of them just fell into a puddle. He looks so funny."

"When Billy went to West Point he said there wouldn't be anybody to fight," the littlest brother submitted shakily. "Less it was Indians. Now they send him to war."

Mary drew a quick breath. Their mother was sewing in the library while Lionel read aloud to her, and she must not hear. She must not think they weren't being brave, too.

"Come here, Bobbie," Mary said softly. "From here you can see 'way up the street."

The littlest brother came gladly, because he was lonely and forlorn. On the wide window-seat it was brighter, and one could see a telegraph-boy a block away if one came. Then, too, Mary would talk, and mother was so silent it frightened a body. Ever since the newspaper had said, yesterday, that an officer, a lieutenant of the Forty-Second, had been killed away off there, mother had not slept, and she was so white— It seemed there were not many lieutenants in C Company of the Forty-Second, and somebody named Censor had held back the name.

"Will the President telegraph, Mary?" he asked in a whisper. "Do you think it's Billy, do you?"

Mary was gazing wild-eyed at a boy in blue who came whistling down the street. What should she do if he came to their steps? Could she get there before he rang? How could she tell mother, how could she?

"If it is Billy, will they put flowers on his grave, Mary?" the littlest brother asked. "Mary, is that boy coming here, is he?"

"No," Mary said with a little gasp. "He's gone to Mrs. Winthrop's. I suppose their aunt is coming to visit. Go open the door for the postman, there's a good boy. The postman is coming, mother," she called. "Bobbie is getting the mail."

Thus would mother be saved the fear that a message had come. Lionel closed the book, and she could hear him speaking with a brave jocularity.

"Well, we'd have heard by this time, anyhow. I said all along there wasn't anything to worry about. It isn't as if he were all alone. He's got a lot of friends in the regiment, you know, and somebody'd wire. They'd have plenty of time, because they never do much the day after a fight."

Bobbie brought in the mail, all cast aside for the picture postals from Billy which they admired while mother read his fat letter in silence. It was the custom to read Billy's letters aloud, but no one wanted the task now. Each could read by himself, except the littlest brother, and Mary read it to him in a whisper on the window-seat. Deep down in their hearts they knew they might have worse than this to bear, with Billy's cheery letters coming every little while, even though Billy himself were lying silent in another land, under the flag of the alien, the enemy. How could they bear it then?

The telephone rang insistently, harshly, and Lionel, who was not worried, sprang with one leap to answer it, his one awful thought being that they did telephone the telegrams sometimes. The color came back to his face as he listened.

"It's father," he said at once. "He says," Lionel added after a moment, "he says that headquarters has had no news,

and he thinks that is encouraging. They would have heard, he thinks. He is coming home early."

Father could not do any business, then? What mattered it whether there was any business done any more; what mattered anything? Mary, on the window-seat, her arm over Bobbie's shoulder, could see, hundreds of miles away, the little group of men fighting desperately against the advancing hordes and one by one falling where they had stood, guarding the stores. A lieutenant was very young, just out of the Point, gay, debonair, affectionate, home-loving boy that he was!

So the time dragged along and father came home. He talked about business and the men who had been in to see him, about a runaway horse that had upset a banana-cart, and about a story in a magazine, but he said no word of Billy. He and mother sat side by side as he talked, and when mother laid her hand on the arm of his chair he put his hand over hers and held it. The papers tossed on the library-table no one had touched. The wild excitement over the war, the thrill at news of battles, the patriotic anxiety to do something to help had left them under the cloud of a possible personal loss. *Billy!* Why, it was only last winter he had been with them, acting like a small boy, with more charming pranks in a half-hour than little Bobbie could think up in a day.

"He was so thoughtful," mother whispered, speaking at last to the strong man beside her. "Do you remember how he brought home those mint candies because he knew I was fond of them? And how he got up in the middle of the night to oil his squeaky door for fear the wind's blowing it might keep me awake? Doesn't it seem as though anything under all the heavens would be easier to bear than suspense like this?"

Bobbie, thinking only of the fact that mother must not be allowed to worry, looked about for aid at this moment. Mary had gone back to the window-seat and Lionel had disappeared, so, as father did nothing but stroke his wife's hand, his face drawn and queer, Bobbie stepped bravely into the breach.

"Mother," he said shakily, "you remember wunst I swallowed a brass bell off my reins? Well, now, mother, it's beginning to hurt something awful right round here."

Bobbie's hand roved indefinitely, uncertainly over the region he supposed to cover his little stomach, but his heroic announcement did not have the desired effect. Instead of rising, horror-struck, to save him, his mother most unexpectedly seized him and gathered him up like a very tiny boy into her lap, where he was still sitting, disgracefully babied, when Lionel excitedly burst in.

"I went over to the drug-store," Lionel cried, with a thrill in his voice which they all felt. "It isn't Billy, it isn't Billy! It was a man named Smith, and he lives in St. Louis, and I found out by telephoning the *Tribune*. And it isn't Billy, it isn't Billy! I was afraid to telephone from here because it might have been. I knew there wasn't anything to worry about. Oh, mother, it isn't Billy!"

Mothers are very queer things, very queer. Here was their mother, who had been silent for thirty hours or so, just sewing on Bobbie's new waist all the time they didn't know whether it was Billy or not, and then, when they knew it was a fellow named Smith, she just put her head down on father's shoulder and cried pitifully. And all father did was to pat her on the back and say: "There, dear, there!" while two great tears rolled down his own cheeks unheeded.

Lionel knelt beside her and put his arms around her as best he could with Bobbie in the way, and Mary crouched down on the other side, as near as she could, her face turned away from him. Mary was crying, too! Perhaps they didn't quite understand.

"I said it was not Billy," he repeated. "There isn't any mistake, either. I made 'em give me the managing editor, and he read the cablegram to me. He was awful nice. He said his brother's down there, too. I thought you'd say 'Thank God!' or something."

Mother put her hand on Lionel's shoulder and patted it gently. "I do say 'Thank God!' dear," she said through her tears. "But we must not forget in our own great gladness that it was somebody's boy."

Lionel sat flat on the floor, his long length across the rug, and gazed straight ahead. Shorn of its life and drum, its trumpet and shining banner, stripped of its might and power, its charm and triumph and glory, he tasted War.

# Light Verse

## MATILDA AND THE MILLINER

MATILDA in a bonnet-shop:  
Her purse was very flat;  
She fell in love with one she saw  
No bigger than a gnat;  
But when the little tag attached  
She slyly squinted at,  
She cried: "I wouldn't wear a freak  
Upon my head like that!"

The milliner upon the crown  
Bestowed a loving pat.  
"Of course, the style is not for those  
Too scrawny or too fat.  
Marked down from twenty-five to ten,"  
She purred—the cunning cat!  
Up jumped Matilda. "Here," she said,  
"I'll take that lovely hat!"

Grant Paulding

## STUDIES IN NATURAL HISTORY

### THE SUBWAY GUARD (*Clamator Subterraneus*)

THE Subway Guard is chiefly found  
In noisome regions underground,  
Where back and forth he'll all day scuttle  
Much like a bobbin in a shuttle.

But oft with loud vociferations  
He indicates approaching stations;  
Then opes a dark, reluctant door,  
Yells "Watcherstep!" and shuts once more.

The Language of the Subway Guard,  
In spite of science, trying hard,  
Has not thus far been comprehended;  
But patient effort has not ended.

This much is known—that "Wowty-eacht"  
Means Forty-Second Street is reached,  
While "Tatty-wax" means Twenty-Third;  
Beyond this none has caught a word.

The Guard, like Grouse or Norway Pheasant,  
Has one odd trait that's not unpleasant—  
His plumage changes with the season;  
And yet for some mysterious reason

Instead of, grouselike, growing white  
When snowflakes swarm in wintry flight,  
The Subway Guard in white is seen  
When summer-time is hot and green.

There's just one simple recreation  
Brightens his life's dull iteration—  
That is, when you would enter in,  
To shut you out and stand and grin.

You shake your fist and stamp and shout;  
For all that, you are still shut out,  
And you should learn, impatient one,  
The Subway Guard must have some fun!

George Jay Smith

## THE KICKER

WHEN we have put the dogs in leash,  
And muzzled all the cats,  
And legislated laws to stop  
The squeaking of the rats,  
And killed the flies because they buzz,  
The birds because they sing,  
And gagged the roosters and the hens,  
And silenced everything;

When we have caught the honey-bees  
And muffled them, I say;  
When not a hum is heard around  
The blossoms of the May;  
Then some disgruntled malcontent  
Will up and start a riot,  
And tear the language into rags  
Because it is too quiet!

Minna Irving

## TWILIGHT

IS candle time, when lights are lit,  
The happiest hour? How exquisite  
The ladies look, in bright brocade—  
A lovely feminine brigade—  
With puff and powder, wealth and wit!

In the dim room, where shadows flit,  
They drink their tea and cordials; sit  
In state and splendor. Rightly made  
Is candle time.

Ah! it is meet, supremely fit  
That life should move like this. They quit  
The garden when the cloth is laid,  
Pull up their chairs, and draw the shade,  
Whisper, with nodding heads; for it  
Is scandal time!

Charles Hanson Towne

# THE REMOVAL OF BARNEY McFEE

BY FRANK CONDON

ILLUSTRATED BY MODEST STEIN



WHEN you come to think it over in a dispassionate way, looking at all the various angles judicially and without bias, why shouldn't the female population of a town called Marysville have the right to vote? If it had been Johnsville or Jamestown or Phillipsburg or Williamsport, or even East Percival, the situation might have been different.

And yet it was more than one hundred and thirty years after George Washington chased the last of the British down through the Narrows before the ladies of Marysville came into their own; possessed themselves of the franchise and the right to vote and gathered about the polling-booths on Election Day, avoiding the cigar-butts and tobacco-juice of the coarser sex as best they could.

That was a great day for the ladies of that State. To be sure, a good many women in the commonwealth cared but little about the ballot, and would have traded it upon a minute's notice for an organdy skirt with a four-inch slit, but in Marysville, which is a hotbed of suffragism, the news of victory was received with loud shrieks of triumph.

Mrs. Sarah Comstock, president of the Ladies' Protective Union, immediately congratulated Mrs. General Isaac Cullom, and Mrs. Matilda Mercer telephoned the glad tidings to Mrs. Coralie Thompson, the president of the Ladies' Benevolent Association. On the very next day all these estimable ladies and a score of the lesser feminine lights of Marysville foregathered at the home of Mrs. Homer

Titus, wife of Marysville's most influential banker, and talked over the future in the serious way of persons upon whose shoulders a great responsibility has been placed.

Until the passage of the Women's Rights bill by the voice of the Michigan people the men of Marysville had gone along from year to year, voting in a sort of sodden manner, without regard for the opinions of their womenfolk. There was one bitter occasion when the ladies of Marysville unanimously decided among themselves that a bronze Cupid, squirting water from his mouth, ought to adorn the watering-trough in Public Square. They put it up to the men to vote upon. And the low-sunk, brutalized members of the voting sex had canned the bronze Cupid project and had voted to spend the money on a site for a nail factory.

There were other little things like this that rankled and caused the embittered ladies to say "Wait till we get the vote!"

There was no doubt of one thing. The voting women of Marysville outnumbered the men, and after the right to vote came they sat upon their bread-winners with joyous abandon. If the men wanted smoking compartments in the winter street-cars the women leagued together and voted a loud and vociferous "No!"

And so it went. They say a woman can remember an injury longer than a man, and the women of Marysville seemed to have a lengthy list of old grievances.

But it was when the Congressional election came along and stood Marysville on its head that civil war began to threaten the community.

There were two popular men in town,



and, strangely enough, they were widely apart in their respective spheres.

One of them was good old Judge William Redonnett, the town idol, and the other was Barney McFee, the leading bartender in the West End saloon.

Judge Redonnett was a tall, slender, dignified gentleman with a gray goatee, a kindly smile, cheerful blue eyes, and a heart of pure gold. He was Marysville's chief magistrate. He settled disturbances of all sorts, chiefly by taking the litigants aside and talking in a low, friendly voice. If a man and woman came tearing into the judge's court to obtain a quick divorce before committing murder upon each other, the magistrate looked into the merits or demerits of the case, talked to the fire-breathing husband in the west window for ten minutes and to the weeping wife in the east window for another fifteen minutes.

When it was all over the divorce-seekers went forth from the court-room arm in arm, looking into each other's eyes with beatific smiles.

When a Marysville man had a birthday and took occasion to fill himself full of essence of the wheat the judge rescued him from the arresting policeman, sobered him up in the little dim room behind the court, and sent him home to his family full of remorse and sadness.

The judge didn't believe in jails for the people of Marysville. Whenever a citizen got into trouble of any kind he didn't go to his wife. He went to Judge Redonnett.

The women regarded their magistrate as a being a trifle removed from the angels. The men regarded him as a friend.

And from this picture of kindly righteousness and civic virtue—this model magistrate and admirable man—we turn slowly to the red and gleaming features of Marysville's other popular idol—Barney McFee.

It was the concerted opinion of the women of Marysville that if a fiend wanted to start living in human form he would have selected the corpulent form of Barney McFee. Just as Judge Redonnett was tall, dignified, and slender, so was Barney McFee short, fat, and full of the person usually referred to as the Old Harry.

His eyes were merry and without guile, and his sturdy body stood upon a pair of legs resembling the two thicker ones on an

old-fashioned grand piano. He had a fist as large as a prime Hubbard squash, and when it was needful to hit an obstreperous patron of the West End saloon—which was not often—the marks of that event remained upon the citizen for many weeks.

For Barney the men of Marysville would have shed their blood or submitted to a grafting operation. It was his cheery laugh that drove away their blues and his Celtic wit that stung them into activity when they were inclined to weak sloth.

Who was it cursed them roundly and sent them home under threats when they overstepped the bounds of propriety? Barney McFee. Who loaned them money when they were temporarily *hors du car* fare? Barney.

Who advised them wisely about little domestic tribulations that come only to the ears of a bartender? Barney again. Who told them to cut out the hard stuff and stick to beer and then made them do it? McFee, yclept Barney.

But there is no need of continuing. As



HE SETTLED DISTURBANCES BY TALKING IN A LOW, FRIENDLY VOICE

the women hated Barney, the men adored him.

They knew their womenfolk were wrong when they bad-named the West End barman, but who shall argue with his wife over the virtues of a red-faced man in a white apron behind a sinful mahogany bar?

And another coincidence is that in the days of their fulsome youth Barney McFee and Judge Redonnett were good friends. They had gone to the red school-house together. The judge went to college. Barney went to work.

The election of a Congressman for the Third Congressional District, of which Marysville was the central town, brought forth two prominent sentiments. Said the proud and vote-owning women:

"Judge William Redonnett is our foremost citizen. We love him dearly. Therefore, having the power to do so, we will elect him to Congress, knowing that he will do us honor."

The male citizens heard of this movement. They heard also of the sneering references that were made about the men of Marysville during the meeting. It is possible that if the ladies had been more diplomatic the men would have joined in with them, for the judge was popular with both sexes. But when you say to a person, "Look at that tree," and then hit him on the side of the head to make him look, it is probable that the person will object to doing so and will do something else.

So the male voters of Marysville gathered—or a few of them did—in Barney McFee's West End dispensary and talked over the growing impertinence of their wives, sweethearts, and such. It was General Cullom who first put the thought into words.

"Barney," he said, looking at Mr. McFee, who was industriously polishing a glass, "how would you like to go to Congress?"

"I was there once," Barney answered. "They put me out for smoking a cigarette."

"I mean," the general continued, "if you were to be nominated and elected from the Third Congressional District, will you consent to serve?"

McFee put down his glass and smiled.

"Somebody told me, general, that you never tried to kid a person. Haven't I always been a good friend of yours?"

"Precisely," answered the general, "and that is why I am offering you this great honor. I am not overstating matters when I say that we men of Marysville can control this coming political situation, although the other sex, with its newly acquired privileges, seems to think otherwise. You are a bartender. Admitted. But you are also a good, upright, honest, honorable, sober, industrious citizen, and I ask, gentlemen, what other qualities are required of a first-grade Congressman?"

Then General Cullom, following his invariable custom, made a long speech. Several others also cast a few pearls of thought into the air. It was quite an evening, and when Barney was actually convinced that the men were not joking he consented to run for Congress, principally because that was one of the few things he had never done in a long and adventurous career.

He was nominated by acclaim, and when the women of Marysville heard the news they emitted a few quail-like cries, held another convention, and nominated Judge Redonnett. The judge accepted in a dignified speech, and that evening he dropped into Barney McFee's.

"Bill," Barney exclaimed cheerfully, "accept my congratulations. I'm going to lick the everlasting hide off you."

"Barney," the judge answered with his faint, whimsical smile, "why in the world are you running for Congress against your old friend? Man alive, how can you do it with your reputation?"

"My what?" Barney demanded.

"Do you know," Judge Redonnett went on, concealing a smile behind his slim hand, "do you know what the women of Marysville think of you? Do you realize that you are looked upon as a confirmed wrecker of homes, a breaker-down of sterling manhood, the enemy of health, sobriety, and eugenics—"

"Eu—what?" Barney asked.

"Eugenics—the science of breeding. 'Put not,' as Shakespeare says, 'an enemy into thy mouth to steal thy brains away,' and here you are, all these years, putting gallons of enemy into the mouths of our good townspeople. For shame, Barney McFee! How can you run for Congress? How dare you?"

The judge's eyes were sober, but his lips smiled above his goatee.

"Now look here, Bill Redonnett,"

Barney retorted, spurred into wrath, "you can all that stuff. Who's a wrecker of homes? Why, you old stiff, if it hadn't been for me half of this town would be locked up in the dipso institutions! Me, an enemy of health and sobriety! Do you realize the fact that I wouldn't sell a drink of rum to a man who's had enough for a thirty-dollar bill? Do you understand that? How many other barmen would do it? Do you know that I keep 'em from drinking the hard stuff and make

bustin' a ninety-dollar plate-glass mirror with a cheese-plate because it irritated you?"

"Now—now, Barney," the judge protested, "those were just youthful pranks—merely the exuberances of a full-blooded disposition."

"Sure," Barney continued cheerfully,



THE DIVORCE-SEEKERS WENT FORTH  
ARM IN ARM, LOOKING INTO  
EACH OTHER'S EYES WITH  
BEATIFIC SMILES

'em drink beer? Why, I send them home and promise to follow them and see that they go there.

"I'm saving this sin-wedded town. I'm the biggest booster temperance has got. And, anyhow, you're a fine, complacent man to be coming around here tellin' me things! Maybe you can remember back to a few years ago when *your* light was still burning. Do you recall the night you came in to see me in the old place, announcing that you were a wild puma from the moaning forest and that it was your night to shriek? No? Do you remember

"and I suppose it was also exooberance when you drove Mulcahy's two-horse hack straight through the barroom and out the back door, takin' along a hundred dollars' worth of doors, windows, and furniture. Yes? And who held you down? I did.

"Well, you grew up and got over your wild days, just like these town boys are going to get over theirs in the course of time. They'll all be nice, dignified old gentlemen, sitting on their front porches with carpet slippers on their feet and good books all around them. Judge, you make me weary."

"Shake hands, Barney," the judge laughed. "I just came in here to rile you



"LADIES OF MARYSVILLE," MRS. TITUS BEGAN IN—  
 BLED UNAWARE UPON A VAST DISCOVERY.—  
 NOON THAT I CONSIDER—

up a bit. You're a better man than I am, but I'm going to give you a fight. I've got to. If it was up to me alone I'd drop out and help elect you, but—but there are a large number of earnest, indignant ladies in Marysville who insist upon electing me. So we are rivals."

"Have a snifter, Bill, before the crowd comes in?" Barney asked.

"Just one," answered the judge.

## II

THE electioneering that stirred Marysville to its hearthstones will never be forgotten in that bustling village. It was wholly a sex election. Barney McFee represented Adam; Judge Redonnett was the candidate of Eve.

The Marysville *Weekly Planet* began to set up half-page advertisements that brought the blush. The judge blushed because the ladies painted him like unto the lily; and Barney blushed because the ladies called him names that reflected upon his present, past, and future. One of their lighter statements about him was

that he "was a pickled toad writhing in a sea of alcohol."

The town was covered from center to circumference with expensive lithographs showing Barney, with a shovel, standing before a chute leading down to Hades, into which he was pitching the manhood and youth of Marysville.

On the next bill-board Judge Redonnett walked sublimely forth with a small halo over his head, leading crippled orphans toward a luscious meal in the background.

Just about the time the campaign had reached the boiling point a sudden and astounding thought came prancing down Main Street on a sunny afternoon, meeting Mrs. Homer Titus, wife of the banker, as she came out of the ice-cream store.

Of all the stern, moral, upright ladies in Marysville Mrs. Titus was probably the most such. Crime cringed in its crawling crannies every time Mrs. Titus appeared. Virtue took off its laurel and made mo-

—THE LOW, TENSE TONE OF ONE WHO HAS STUM-  
 —"I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY THIS AFTER-  
 —OF GREAT IMPORTANCE"



tions as though to hand it to the banker's wife. When Mrs. Titus got to heaven she expected nothing less than a red-plush carpet leading in from the street, under a brown awning, with little fiddlers playing old hymns and some regular representative of heaven to receive her in a dress suit.

Within one hour from that pregnant instant a large gathering of the fair sex voters and electioneers of Marysville were assembled in Mrs. Titus's parlor.

"Ladies of Marysville," Mrs. Titus began in the low, tense tone of one who has stumbled unaware upon a vast discovery, "I have something to say this afternoon that I consider of great importance. We are now launched upon a campaign to elect Judge William Redonnett to Congress. If we continue our earnest efforts we will succeed in doing so; but, ladies—and here I pause so that the next thought may sink deeply into your minds—do you

realize that if we elect this noble man and send him far away to Washington we will still have with us in our midst, prowling at our very doors, attacking our husbands, sons, and brothers, *that reprobate, Barney McFee!*"

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Sarah Comstock.

"Great Heavens!" ejaculated Mrs. General Isaac Cullom.

And so on down the list, each lady exclaiming, according to her favorite method of so doing.

"There is but one thing to be done in this terrible crisis," Mrs. Titus continued in crescendo fortissimo. "We must halt in the middle of the battle, about face, throw our entire strength to Barney McFee, elect him, and send him away to Washington, so that he may no longer pollute our eyesight and sell drinks to our husbands."

If you have any definite idea of what "consternation" means, you can picture to yourself the exciting half-hour that followed this bombshell thrown in Mrs. Titus's drawing-room. The strongest argument offered against this radical action



was that even if Barney McFee were elected; even if he were sent miles away, some other evil barman would take his place and sell drinks.

This was shattered with one shot. It was pointed out that no other human being could so completely gain possession of the bodies and souls of the Marysville men as Barney had done.

When the caucus had ended it was moved, seconded, and adopted that the entire female vote of Marysville should be given to Barney McFee, and that a committee of apology should be appointed to call upon Judge Redonnett and explain the action after the election was over.

The remainder of the campaign was one of studied secrecy on the part of the ladies and dim wonder from the men. The suffrage ones were fearful that if the change in plans became known the men would do something—would retaliate in some manner and spoil everything by probably not sending Barney McFee to Congress.

On the night of election the first Marysville returns indicated that Mr. McFee was in the lead. The ladies gave a few silent cheers and nudged each other gently. Slightly later returns showed Mr. McFee increasing his lead, and about that time it became known to the men of Marysville that they had been circumvented by their womenfolk; that the finer subtleties of politics were unknown to them, and that they had been forced to cooperate with the ladies in getting rid of the loathsome man of the West End.

"Can you beat that?" General Cullom demanded when he heard.

"You can't even knot it," said Mr. Homer Titus, the banker, who had given good dollars to McFee's campaign fund.

More returns. McFee out in front like a greyhound, and poor old Judge Redonnett limping along in the dust.

Naturally the earlier returns were those of Marysville itself, and just as naturally McFee was bound to show well, but there were other places in the Third Congressional District—places that were not entwined in the death-grapple between the sexes and that neither knew nor cared about Barney McFee, the genial dispenser.

Slowly Judge Redonnett began to pick up lost ground. It may have been that some of the men of Marysville, thinking

at the last moment that Judge Redonnett surely was better qualified than Barney, changed their votes. It may have been many things; but as the hours drew toward midnight and the outer district voters expressed their wishes the race grew tight, and on the stroke of one Judge Redonnett was running neck and neck with his boyhood friend.

At five minutes after one the election clerk stepped to the door and said:

"I have not all the returns, but they are practically all in, and we can almost positively announce that Judge Redonnett is elected by about twenty-five or thirty votes—possibly more."

Mrs. Homer Titus lifted her smelling-salts to her virtuous nose and began to cry. Mrs. Sarah Comstock glared around upon the assembled men as though one of them had insulted her. The various other leaders waited in gloomy silence, hoping that the final vote would send the "reprobate" to Congress.

But it was not to be.

The complete and final returns elected Judge William Redonnett to Congress from the third district.

Barney, standing beside the judge, plucked him by the sleeve.

"Bill," he said cheerfully, "I congratulate you. I was a joke, wasn't I?"

The women of Marysville trailed homeward in the chill air of early morning, defeated, whipped, and discouraged whenever they thought of the demon whom they had not driven from them.

And as for Barney—

One year from that very date the State Legislature passed a bill bestowing local option upon all the communities within the borders of the commonwealth, and one of the first things that happened was a vote in Marysville wiping Barney McFee and the West End saloon completely from the map—of the town. And Barney, taking his Lares and Penates by the hand, sauntered far into the golden West, where he set up in San Francisco. He now owns the largest, most ornate, most gilded, and most popular café in California. There are gold lions before the doors. Inside are marble and onyx columns and six gold cash-registers, a flock of barmen—it's quite a place.

Every year Barney sends Congressman Redonnett a letter, thanking him for what happened in Marysville.

# An Outsider\*

by Louis Joseph Vance

Author of

"The Lone Wolf"

"Joan Thursday" "The Brass Bowl" etc

*A full length book novel, printed complete in this issue*

## CHAPTER I

### ANARCHY

"WHAT you gonna have?"

To this inquiry the patron made no response; head bent, nose between the pages of the magazine, she pored sedulously over a legend attached to one of the illustrations.

After a decent pause in waiting the waitress renewed her demand with a sharper accent:

"Say, lis'en; what you want?"

"'White satin, veiled with *point d'Angleterre*,'" Miss Manvers replied distinctly, if without looking up, aware simply of something imperative in the starched but perspiring presence at her elbow.

Pardonably startled, the waitress demanded with the rising inflection: "Wha-a-at?"

"'The court train,'" Miss Manvers pursued in abstraction, "'is lined with lace and dotted with bouquets of orange-blossoms—'"

She checked herself suddenly, looked up shyly, and essayed a pale, apologetic smile.

"I'm sorry, I didn't realize—"

But now the waitress had caught a glimpse of the illustration and was bending over the patron's shoulder for a better look.

"Gee!" she commented sincerely, "ain't that a dream?"

"Yes," Miss Manvers admitted wistfully; "it's a dream, right enough!"

"That's so, too." Deftly, with a large, moist, red hand, the waitress arranged knife, fork, spoon, and paper serviette on the unclothed brown board before Miss Manvers. "That's the worst of them fashion mag'zines," she complained, "they get your goat. Sometimes after readin' some of that dope I can't hardly remember orders right, just for wishin' somebody'd come along and hang a few of them rags onto me!"

Then, catching the eye of the manager, she straightway resumed her professional habit of slightly wilted hauteur — compounded in equal parts of discontent, tired

feet, heat-fag, and that profound disdain for food-consuming animals which inevitably informs the mind of every quick-lunch waitress.

"What you gonna have?" she demanded dispassionately.

"Ham-and, please."

"Plate of ham-and. Cawfy?"

"Yes, iced coffee and"—Miss Manvers hesitated briefly—"and a napoleon."

Reciting the amended order, the waitress withdrew.

For the next few moments the customer neglected the fashion magazine which she had found—apparently a souvenir of some other absent-minded patron—on the seat of the chair next that one of her own casual choice.

She stared blankly at the smudged and spotted bill of fare propped up, in its wooden frame, against an armor-plate-china sugar-bowl. She was deeply intrigued by the mystery of human frailty as exemplified by her reckless extravagance in ordering that superfluous bit of pastry. Miss Manvers's purse contained a single coin of silver, the quarter of a dollar; being precisely the sum of her entire fortune. Her ham and beans would cost fifteen cents, the coffee and the napoleon five cents each. In other words, she would be penniless when she had paid her score—and Heaven only knew for how long afterward.

Her lips moved without sound in her worn and pallid face. "What's the difference?" they bullyragged her conscience. "I might as well be broke as the way I am!"

The argument was painfully reasonable; that inmate of New York who has but five cents has nothing.

On the other hand, there was nothing whatever to be advanced in extenuation of her folly in thus inviting indigestion—a passion for pastry is its own punishment no less than any other infatuation to which mortal flesh is prone. Sally was morally certain she would suffer, and that severely, before nightfall.

"Well, what of it?" she grumbled sullenly. "If I die for it, it's cheap at the price! And, no matter what happens, it can't be any hotter afterward than it is now."

Somehow soothed by this cynical reflection, she sat up, mopped her flushed forehead with a handkerchief of which she was

not proud, and drank thirstily of her tumbler of ice-water.

The grateful draft reminded her that she had actually been athirst ever since noon. It was now almost three o'clock. Thanks to which fact she might eat in the comparative comfort of a lunch-room which boasted no patron other than herself. But she was little appreciative of this boon; she comprehended her surroundings with just a little languid resentment of their smug cleanliness and their atmosphere impregnated with effluvia of cheap edibles. But if these seemed offensive she would have been willing to overlook them on certain conditions—as she proved when the waitress reappeared with her order.

"I don't suppose—" Miss Manvers began, but hesitated.

"What say?"

"I don't suppose you need any more girls here?"

"Lookin' for a job?" the waitress inquired brilliantly. "I dunno—I'll ask the manager, if you want."

Miss Manvers nodded a barely audible "Please."

She munched drearily for a few minutes, staring out through the front windows wherein, from dawn till dark, a white-clad *chef* industriously browned the wheats and cast sinkers; beyond their wide expanse of plate-glass, stenciled with the name of the establishment in reverse, a vista of sun-smitten street danced drunkenly through the reek from the sheet-iron griddles. Miss Manvers wondered dully if the sidewalks were really less hot than those same griddles.

"The manager says nothin' doin'," the waitress reported. "But you can leave your name and add-ress if you wanta."

"Thanks," said Miss Manvers; "but what's the use?"

"That's right, all right," the other sympathized. "Besides, take it from me, this ain't the kind of a job you could make good at. You gotta be a horse like me to stand it, 'specially days like this."

"Yes, I was thinking of that—"

"Believe me or not, nobody ain't got no idear what hot is without they've juggled hash in one of these joints on a summer day. The kitchen back there is positively somethin' fierce. Three of our girls fainted dead away in the noon rush."

"Oh, I know," Miss Manvers sighed; "I've tried it before—and failed."

The entrance of another customer prevented further confidences, and Miss Manvers was left to resume her scanning of the fashion magazine.

If its distracting quality was unquestionable, it hardly contributed comfort to her mood.

"In selecting her personal apparel," she read, "the bride-to-be must, of necessity, be guided by individual requirements and the social position which she is to assume. Although much has been said about the advisability of purchasing only what is really needed and can be worn before the styles change, it is a common fault of brides to buy too much. . . . It is assumed that the June bride will have already on hand a suit or two, a one-piece frock of serge or similar material, a top-coat, an afternoon coat or one of the new capes, evening gowns, and an evening wrap, one or two afternoon and luncheon frocks, and hats, shoes, and similar accessories. . . ."

Here Miss Manvers withdrew from the printed page long enough mentally to inventory her own wardrobe.

"That let's me out," she said, and turned a page.

The caption, "A Feudal Aristocracy," caught her attention. "Long Island," she learned, "is a poem itself to-day, even if it is suffering from cheap developments, the encroachment of tenantry, and the swarming of the commuters. It is too bad that this garden spot must be overrun, and indeed there has been a movement to stay the tide of immigration from the city. In one section our best people are buying up vast stretches of property to add to their private estates. . . ."

Fascinated, Miss Manvers thrust aside a garnished plate, took a gulp of the decoction called coffee, and attacked her napoleon.

"I am so glad," she continued to read, "to see that we are adding to our estates and fast forming an aristocracy of the countryside; we really live at our country places now for over half the year. Even the large weddings are no longer town affairs. If one has an estate it is so much smarter now to marry off one's daughters from the country place. Yet there is always one difficulty about this method of procedure: can such weddings be afforded the prominence necessary? Weddings, of course, must be given a certain amount of

advertisement, through the proper channels, because each of us stands for a representative house, which must not drop into oblivion. . . ."

At this point Miss Manvers wrinkled her nose indignantly. "Just for that," she informed the unknown author of this artless screed, "just for that now, I've a great mind not to go to Long Island at all this summer—not even once to Coney!"

She turned impatiently back to the advertising pages and reviewed the "classified wants" listlessly, forewarned by experience that they would offer no invitation to one of her singularly modest accomplishments; none of these advertisers desired the services of a saleswoman, a typist, or even a lady's-maid. Not that Miss Manvers imagined she would score a success in the rôle of lady's-maid, though it was almost the only means of earning a livelihood which, thus far, she had not essayed.

Such work was hardly calculated to suit a girl with a mind of independent cast and what is known as a temper of her own; prohibitive barriers between her and such bread as may be earned in the sweat of domestic servitude.

Little disappointed, then, she turned attention to "Chat of the Social World," gossip which exercised potent fascination upon the girl's intelligence. She devoured with more avidity than she had her food those pretentiously phrased chronicles of the snobocracy—trite announcements of post-season luncheons, dinners, dances, and bridge parties; of departures for Europe and for American country homes, of engagements and of weddings—distilling therefrom an acid envy that robbed her napoleon of all its flavor.

Such was the life for which she yearned with every famished aspiration of her being. And why not? Who were these whose half-tone portraits smirked complacency or scowled disdain to her inspection; who were these that they should enjoy every good thing in life while she must go hungering all her days for a little pleasure? Scarce one betrayed by feature or expression either breeding or intelligence superior to that of Sally Manvers, late of the hardware notions in Huckster's Bargain Basement!

Regarding the full-page reproduction of a photograph showing a jibber-jawed June bride in full regalia, Miss Manvers was



moved enviously to paraphrase an epigram of moot origin: "There, but for the grace of God, stands Sally Manvers!"

There was enough truth in that to excuse a little gulp of emotion; which, however, was craftily dissembled.

In due course, rising, Miss Manvers stood and delivered at the desk of the blond cashier and, penniless, wandered forth into the brutal sunshine.

Her homeward way took her up Sixth Avenue, through Thirty-Fourth Street, and northward on Park Avenue.

She went slowly, wearily, as suited a drudge to whom respite from drudgery brought no earnest of ease or pleasure. The burning air beat up into her downcast face from sun-baked stones that scorched through the soles of her shoddy shoes, and she gulped down acrid mouthfuls of it rather than breathed.

June was still young, but already summer, like some burly ruffian shouldering spring aside with her work half done, held the city in the hollow of a hot and humid hand.

In the mid-afternoon glow, lower Park Avenue owned its personal atmosphere of somnolent isolation, in strong contrast with the bustle of proletarian Fourth Avenue at its one extreme and the roar at the other of traffic-galled Forty-Second Street. Of the residences a few, whose awninged windows resembled heavy-lidded eyes, overlooked wayfaring folk with drowsy arrogance; the greater number, with boarded doors and blinded windows, like mouths and eyes tight shut in seasonable slumber, ignored the world entirely.

Though she had passed that way twice a day for years on end—always in consciousness of that aloof spirit informing the inanimate, and in such resentment thereof as properly rewarded a studied insolence—never before to-day had Sarah Manvers found the genius of the neighborhood so unmitigatedly intolerable. It was with downright relief that presently she turned off from the avenue eastward and accomplished in the length of one short cross-town block a transit of the most violent contrasts, from the dull dignity of the socially eligible, if somewhat *passé*, through a stratum of shabby gentility, to a region of late years dedicated to the uses of adversity unashamed.

A few doors short of Lexington Avenue she paused, sighed, turned, climbed weath-

er-bitten steps to a brownstone entrance, and addressed herself to three long flights of naked stairs.

She left behind, at the entrance, the dingy parlors of "Mme. Levin, Modes et Toilettes," on the first landing the wailing-rooms of a hag-ridden teacher of vocal culture, on the next several dusty chambers perennally unrented, and gained at the top an open door whose panels sported a simple rectangle of cardboard advertising the tenancy of (in engraved script) *Miss Lucy Spode*, (in ink) *M. A. Warden*, and (in pencil, a scrawl) *Manvers*.

Through this the girl walked into a back room of generous size, which boasted a top-light, together with the generic name of studio, and was furnished with an ill-assorted company of lame and dismal pieces. The several vocations of its tenants were indicated by a typewriting-machine beneath a rubber hood thick with dust, a folding metal music-stand and a violin-case, and a large studio easel supplemented by a number of scrubby canvases. A door in the partition wall communicated with a small bedchamber of the kind commonly termed "hall room." And in one corner a stationary wash-stand and a gas-stove for morbid cookery lurked behind a Japanese screen of dilapidated panels.

Near the windows, on the end of a box-couch, a young woman was perched, thin shoulders rounded over the ink-stained drawing-board resting on her knees. She had a large, self-willed mouth and dark Bohemian hair, and wore a dreary cotton kimono over a silk petticoat whose past had been lurid. One hand clutched gingerly a bottle of India ink, the other wielded a scratchy steel drafting-pen.

Interrupted, she looked up with a start that all but spilled the ink and cried in a voice heavily colored with the enervating brogue of the Southern born:

"My land, Sally! *What time is it?*"

In the act of unpinning her hat (a straw that even a drowning woman would have hesitated to grasp at) Miss Manvers paused to consult an invalid alarm-clock which was suffering palpitations on an adjacent shelf.

"Twenty past three," she reported, sententiously.

The artist cocked her head, squinted malevolently at her drawing, dipped, and busily scratched once more.



"Scared me," she explained, "coming home so early!"

Sally removed her collar with a wrench and a grunt. "Got a date?"

"Sure; with Sammy—four o'clock."

"Salamander stuff, eh?"

"What do you want—a day like this? I'm half-cooked already, and I guess I can go through a little fire for the sake of a sixty-cent *table d'hôte* and a trip to Coney. But you needn't worry; it'll be hotter than this before Sammy warms up enough to singe anything. His intentions are so praiseworthy they pain him; he blushes every time he has to recognize the sex question long enough to discuss the delights of monogamy in a two-family house within commuting distance of Prospect Park South."

"You don't mean to say you've got that far along—already?"

"That's the reward of a year's steady angling, honey."

"Heavens, but how you must carry on with Sammy!"

"Believe me, it's something scandalous!" sighed Lucy Spode.

"But why—" Sally began in a tone of expostulation.

The other quickened with a flash of temper. "Don't ask me! I came No'th to study art and mingle with the world of intellect and fashion, and after three years I'm drawing heads for fashion magazines at a dollar per, and I know a minor poet who's acquainted with the assistant editor of *The Scrap-Book*, and the one man I know who owns a dress-suit gets fifty cents an hour for posing in it. If that isn't enough to make me welcome even the prospect of married life with Sammy Myerick and a woman to do the washing, I don't know—"

"Well, if you aren't crazy about Sammy, why not chuck him? Marriage isn't the last resource for a girl like you. You've got just as many wits to live on as the next one. This town's full of young women no better-looking than either of us, and without as much intelligence, who manage pretty comfortably, thank you, on the living the world owes them."

"Sally Manvers!" cried the Southern girl, scandalized, "what a way to talk!"

"Oh, *all* right," said the other indifferently. "Where's Mary Warden?"

"Lyric Hall—rehearsing."

"Lucy Mary!"

Lucy Spode looked up in astonishment. "Lucky!" she protested; "dancing till she's ready to drop, in this awful heat, and no pay for rehearsals!"

"All the same," Sally contended, "she's got some chance, some right to hope for better things. She's an understudy, and her principal might fall ill—or something. That's better than marrying a man you don't care for—or clerking at Huckster's for seven dollars a week."

"Cat," said Miss Spode dispassionately. "Who's been mussing your fur?"

"Life."

The steel pen was poised again while Lucy Spode surveyed Sally Manvers suspiciously.

"What do you mean—life?" she demanded.

"This sort of thing." Sally waved a comprehensive hand. "Living here, in this hole, and most of the time not even able to pay my share of the rent; slaving for a dollar a day, and losing part of that in unjust fines; walking to and from the store to save car fare; eating the sort of food we do eat; never having any pretty clothes or any pleasures of any sort. I don't call this a life. I'm sick of it all!"

"You've got indigestion," Miss Spode diagnosed shrewdly. "I'll bet two bits you've been eating napoleons again."

"I have got indigestion, but it's mostly due to being fed up with existence—the kind we lead, at least. I want something better."

"The vote, perhaps?"

"For two cents I'd throw something at you."

The artist uncoiled her legs, stuck the pen in her hair, set the ink-bottle down on the floor, sighed, and, lifting the drawing-board, held it at arm's length, studying her work through narrowed eyelids.

"Then it must be a man," she concluded absently. "When a woman of twenty-seven wants something and doesn't know what it is, it's either the vote or a man."

"Oh, shut up."

"With man an odds-on favorite in the betting." Miss Spode laid the board aside with a "Thank goodness, that's finished!" and, rising, stretched her cramped limbs. "What I'd like to know," she persisted, "is whether it's man abstract or a man concrete."

Sally laughed bitterly. "Take a good look at me, dear—as an exhibit, not as a

friend—and tell me honestly whether any man worth having would glance twice at me."

"You can be pretty enough," Miss Spode returned seriously, "when you want to take the trouble—"

"But I don't—ever."

"The more fool you."

"What's the use—on seven a week? What's the good of being pretty in rags like these? It only gets you in wrong. I don't care how fetching I might make myself seem—"

"But you ought to."

"Look here; do you know how a reporter would describe me?"

"Of course; 'respectable working girl.'"

"Well, then, men worth while don't run after 'respectable working girls'; they leave that to things who wear 'Modish Men's Clothing'—with braided cuffs and pockets slashed on the bias!—and stand smirking on corners we have to pass going home. Do you think I'd do my hair becomingly, and—and all that—to attract such creatures?"

"So it's abstract man. Thought so!"

"It's starvation, that's what it is. I'm sick for want of what other girls get without asking—pretty clothes and—and all that sort of thing."

"Meaning," the artist interpreted gravely, "love."

"Well," Sally demanded, defiant, "why not?"

"Why not indeed?" Lucy returned obliquely, wandering round the studio and collecting various articles of wearing-apparel toward her appearance in public.

"I'm twenty-seven," Miss Manvers declared mutinously. "I'll never be younger, and—I want to be loved before I'm old!"

She paused, viewed with reassuring amusement Lucy's countenance of perplexity, and laughed again.

"I've had ten years of independence; and what has it brought me? The reward of virtue: that swaybacked couch for my bed, Uneeda biscuit for my bread, and for salt—tears of envy!"

"Virtue is its own reward," Lucy enunciated severely.

"Virtue is its only reward, you mean!"

"You don't talk fit to eat."

"You know what I mean. Only mental bankrupts go to the devil because they're hungry. I'm less bothered about keeping

body and soul together—Huckster's seven a week does that after a fashion—than about keeping soul and mind together."

"It sounds reasonable."

"I'm desperate, I tell you! And there's more than one resort of desperation for a girl of intelligence."

"As, for instance—"

"Well—you've named one."

"Man?"

"That's the animal's first name."

"But, you've just pointed out, a successful campaign demands a wardrobe."

"Even that can be had if one's unscrupulous enough."

"Whatever do you mean?"

"To seek happiness where I can find it. I'm game for anything. I'm 'north of fifty-three'!"

"You're *what*?"

"Have you forgotten the 'Rhyme of the Three Sealers'? 'There's never a law of God or man runs north of fifty-three'! Well, the age of twenty-seven is a woman's fifty-three, north latitude—at least, it is if she's unmarried—time to jettison scruples, morals, regard for the conventions, and hoist the black flag of social piracy!"

"In plain language, you think the hour has struck to doll yourself up like a man-trap. What?"

"Yes—and hang the expense!"

"By all means, hang it. But where? It's a case of cash or credit; the first you haven't got, and I don't see your visible means of supporting a charge-account at Youngman's."

"There are ways," Sally insisted darkly.

"You can't mean you'd do anything dishonest—"

"I'd do *anything*. Look at all the people in high places who began as nothing more nor less than adventurers. Nobody's fussing about how they got their money. It's no sin to be poor nowadays, but the sin of sins is to stay poor!"

A moment of silence followed this pronouncement; then Miss Spode observed pensively:

"Something's happened to you to-day, Sally. What is it? You haven't been—"

"Fired again? Not exactly. Just laid off indefinitely—that's all. With good luck I may get my job back next September."

"Oh, but, honey!" Lucy explained, crossing to drop a hand on Sally's shoulder, "I am sorry!"

"Of course you are," Sally returned stonily. "But you needn't be. I'm not going to let this make things any harder for you and Mary Warden."

"How perfectly mean! You know, I wasn't thinking anything like that!"

"Yes, dear, I do know it." In sudden contrition, Sally caught the other girl's hand and laid her cheek transiently against it. "What I meant to make clear was"—she faltered momentarily—"I've made up my mind I'm a Jonah, and the only decent thing for me to do is to quit you both, Lucy, my dear!"

She ended on a round note of determination rather than of defiance, and endured calmly, if with a slightly self-conscious smile, the distressed look of her companion.

"Don't be silly!" this last retorted, pulling herself together. "You know you're welcome—"

"Of course I do. All the same, I'm not taking any more, thanks."

"But it's only a question of time. If you can't wait for Huckster's to take you on again, Mary and I can easily keep things going until you find another job."

"But that wouldn't be fair!"

"What wouldn't be fair?"

"To sponge on you two under false pretenses."

"False pretenses!" Lucy iterated blankly.

"I was laid off last Saturday. I didn't say anything, but I've been looking for something else ever since—and this is Wednesday, and I'm through. I'm sick and tired. I've got just as much right as anybody to live on society, and that's what I'm going to do from now on!"

Miss Spode lowered a cloth skirt over her head and stiffly starched shirt-waist before pursuing. "But what I can't understand is how—assuming you're in earnest—"

"Deadly earnest!" Sally declared.

"—and mean to go through with this—how you think you'll get a start without doing something downright wrong."

"It wouldn't be fair to tempt me the way I feel to-day."

"There's only one thing," Miss Spode announced, adjusting her hat, "that prevents me from speaking to a cop about you; I know you're a fraud. You couldn't do anything dishonorable to save you."

"Oh, couldn't I!" Sally returned ominously. "You wait and see!"

"Well, well," said the other indulgently, "have it your own way. Hooray for crime! But if I stop here listening to you preach anarchy I'll be late for Sammy. So I'm off." Pausing in the doorway, she looked back with just a trace of doubt coloring her regard. "Do try to brace up and be sensible, honey. I'm worried about leaving you alone with all these blue devils."

"You needn't be. I can take care of myself—"

"Well, promise to do nothing rash before I come home."

"Promises made for keeps are specifically prohibited by article nine of the Social Pirate's Letters of Marque. But I don't mind telling you the chances are you'll find me on the roof when you get back, unless this heat lets up. I'm going up now; this place is simply suffocating!"

But her smile grew dim as she resigned herself to an evening whose loneliness promised to be unbroken; that faint flush faded which had crept into her cheeks in the course of her half-whimsical, half-serious harangue; she looked once more what life had made her—a work-worn shop-girl, of lack-luster charm, on the verge of prematurely middle-aged, hopeless spinsterhood.

Another six months of this life would break her, body and spirit, beyond repair.

Her eyes, that ranged the confines of those mean quarters, darkened quickly with their expression of jaded discontent.

Another six months? She felt as if she could not suffer another six hours.

After a time she rose and moved languidly out into the hall, from which an iron ladder led up through a scuttle to the roof, the refuge and retreat of the studio's tenants on those breathless, interminable summer nights when their quarters were unendurably stuffy. Here they were free to lounge at ease, *en déshabillé*; neither the dressmaker nor the teacher of voice-production ever troubled their privacy, and seldom did other figures appear on any of the roofs which ran to the Park Avenue corner on an exact plane broken only by low dividing walls and chimney-stacks.

Three chairs of the steamer type, all maimed, comprised the furniture of this roof-garden, with (by way of local color) on one of the copings a row of four red clay flower-pots filled with sun-baked dust

from which gnarled and rusty stalks thrust themselves up like withered elfin limbs.

Selecting the soundest chair, Sally dragged it into the shadow cast by the hood of the studio top-light, and settling down with her feet on the adjacent coping, closed her eyes and sought to relax from her temper of high, almost hysterical nervous tension.

Thoughts bred of her talk with Lucy for a time distracted her, blending into incoherent essays at imaginative adventures staged in the homes and parks of the wealthy, as pictured by the sycophantic fashion magazine and cast with the people of its gallery of photographs—sublimely smart women in frocks of marvelous inspiration, and polo-playing, motor-driving, clothes-mad men of an insouciance appalling.

On the edge of unconsciousness she said aloud, but without knowing that she spoke, three words.

These were: "Charmeuse—Paquin—Bride."

And then she slept; her pallid face upturned to that high-arched sky of brass, from which light and heat beat down in brutal waves, she slept the sleep of exhaustion, deep and heavy; dark and stupefying sleep possessed her utterly, as overpowering and obliterating as though induced by drugs.

## CHAPTER II

### BURGLARY

SHE wakened in sharp panic, bewildered by the grotesquerie of some half-remembered dream in contrast with the harshness of inclement fact, drowsily realizing that since she had fallen asleep it had come on to rain smartly out of a shrouded sky.

Without the least warning a blinding violet glare cut the gloom, the atmosphere quaked with a terrific shock of thunder, and the downpour became heavier.

Appalled, the girl sprang from her chair and groped her way to the scuttle through a darkness resembling late twilight.

It was closed.

Somebody, presumably the janitor, had shut it against the impending storm without troubling to make sure there was no one on the roof, for her chair had been invisible behind the shoulder of the top-light.

With a cry of dismay the girl knelt and,

digging fingers beneath the cover, tugged with all her might. But it was securely hooked beneath and held fast.

Then, driven half frantic, less by the lashing rain than by a dread of lightning which she had never outgrown, she stumbled back to the glass face of the top-light and pounded it with her fists, screaming to Mary Warden to come and let her in. But no lights showed in the studio, and no one answered; reluctantly she was persuaded that Mary was not yet home from rehearsals.

The long rolling, grinding broadsides of thunder made almost continuous accompaniment—broken only by the briefest intermissions—to the fiery sword-play that slashed incessantly through and through that grim tilt of swollen black cloud.

Half-stunned and wholly terrified, dazzled and deafened as well, the girl dashed the rain from her eyes and strove to recollect her wits and grapple sanely with her plight.

Already she was wet to her skin—water could no more harm her—but the mad elemental tumult confounded all her senses; her sole conscious impulse was to gain shelter of some sort from the sound and fury of the tempest.

It was a bare chance that a scuttle on some one of the adjacent roofs might be, at least, not fastened down.

Fighting the buffeting wind, the scourging rain, and her panic fright, she gained the scuttle of the roof to the west, but found it immovable.

She tried the next roof, with no better fortune.

Panting, even sobbing a little in her terror, she scrambled on through a sort of nightmarish progress to the next roof, and on and on to the next and the next.

She kept no reckoning, and couldn't have said how many roofs she had crossed, when at length she discovered a scuttle that was actually ajar, propped wide to the pounding flood; and without pause to wonder at this circumstance, or what might be her reception and how to account for herself, she swung down into that hospitable black hole, found footing on the ladder, let herself farther down—and by mischance dislodged the iron arm supporting the cover.

It fell with a bang and a click, and Sally barely escaped crushed fingers by releasing the rim and tumbling incontinently to the floor.



Happily she hadn't far to fall, wasn't hurt, and hastily picking herself up, stood half-dazed, listening for sounds of alarm within the house.

Coincidentally the storm sounded a crisis in a series of tremendous, shattering crashes, so heavy and so prolonged that all the world seemed to rock and vibrate, echoing the uproar like a gigantic sounding-board.

This passed; but from the body of the house Sally heard nothing, only the crepitation of rain on the roof and the sibilant splatter of drops trickling from her saturated skirts into the puddle that had formed beneath the scuttle.

She stood in what at first seemed unrelieved darkness—but for glimpses revealed by the incessant slash and flare of lightning—at one end of a short hallway, by the rail of a staircase well. Three or four doors opened upon this hall; but she detected no sign of any movement in the shadows, and still heard no sound.

Wondering—and now, as she began to appreciate her position, almost as unhappy in her refuge as she had been in the storm—Sally crept to the rail and peered down. But her straining senses detected nothing below more than shadows, solitude, and silence; which, however, failed to convey reassurance; the fact of the open scuttle would seem to indicate that she hadn't stumbled into an uninhabited house.

Stealthily she proceeded to investigate the several rooms of that topmost story—servants' quarters, comfortably furnished, but tenantless.

Then step by timid step she descended to the next floor, which she found devoted to three handsomely appointed bedchambers, also empty. And slowly, as her courage served, another flight took her down to a story given over wholly to two bedchambers with bath, dressing-rooms, and boudoirs adjoining, all very luxurious to a hasty survey.

Below this again was an entrance hall, giving access to a drawing-room, a library, and, at the back of the house, a dining-room, each apartment in its way deepening the impression of a home toward whose making wealth and good taste had worked in rarely harmonious collaboration.

And finally the basement proved to be as deserted as any room above; this though the kitchen clock still ticked on stertorously, though the fire in the range

had been banked rather than drawn, though one had but to touch the boiler to learn it still held water piping hot.

It required, however, only a moment's sober thought, once satisfied she was alone, to suggest as one reasonable solution to the puzzle that the owners had fled town for the week-end, leaving the establishment in care of untrustworthy servants, who had promptly elected to seek their own pleasure elsewhere.

Content with this theory, Sally chose one of the windows of the servants' dining-room from which to spy out stealthily, between the shade and the sill, over a flooded area and street; first remarking a sensible modification of the gloom in spite of an unabated downpour, then that the house was near the Park Avenue corner, finally a policeman sheltered in the tradesman's entrance of the dwelling across the way.

At this last disquieting discovery Sally retreated expeditiously from the window, for the first time realizing that her presence in that house, however adventitious and innocent, wouldn't be easy to explain to one of a policeman's incredulous idiosyncrasy; the legal definition of burglar, strictly applied, fitted Sarah Manvers with disconcerting neatness.

But nobody knew; it was only half past six by the clock in the kitchen; it was reasonably improbable that the faithless servants would come back much before midnight; and she need only wait for the storm to pass to return across the roofs, or, for that matter, to leave circumspectly by the front door. For it would certainly be dark by the time the storm uttered its last surly growl and trailed its bedraggled skirts off across Long Island.

For an instant finely thrilled with a delicious sense of the wild adventure of being alone in a strange house, free to range and pry at will, she found the full piquancy a bit difficult to relish with sodden clothing clinging clammily to her body and limbs.

None the less it was quite without definite design that Sally retraced her way to that suite of rooms in the second story which seemed to be the quarters of the mistress of the establishment; and it was no more than common-sense precaution (prompted, it's true, by sheer, idle curiosity) which moved her to darken windows already shuttered by drawing their draperies of heavy, rose-colored silk before switching on the lights.



It may have been merely the reflection of rose-tinted walls that lent the face of the girl unwonted color, but the glow that informed her eyes as she looked about was unquestionably kindled by envy as much as by excitement.

Nothing, indeed, lacked to excite envy in that hungry heart of hers. The bed-chamber and its boudoir and bath were not only exquisitely appointed, but stood prepared for use at a moment's notice; the bed itself was beautifully dressed; the dressing-table was decked with all manner of scent-bottles, mirrors, and trays, together with every conceivable toilet implement in tortoise-shell with a silver-inlay monogram—apparently A-M-S; the rugs were silken, princely, priceless; elusive wraiths of seductive perfumes haunted the air like memories of lost caresses.

And when the girl pursued her investigations to the point of opening closed doors she found clothes-presses containing a wardrobe to cope with every imaginable emergency—frocks of silk, of lace, of satin, of linen; gowns for dinner, the theater, the street, the opera; boudoir-ropes and negligées without end; wraps innumerable, hats, shoes, slippers, mules—and a store of lingerie to ravish any woman's heart.

And against all this sybaritic store the intruder had to set the figure mirrored by a great cheval-glass—the counterfeit of a jaded shop-girl in shabby, shapeless, sodden garments, her damp, dark hair framing stringily a pinched and haggard face with wistful, care-worn eyes.

Her heart ached with a reawakened sense of the cruel unfairness of life. Her flesh crept with the touch of her rain-soaked clothing. And in her thoughts temptation stirred like a whispering serpent.

Beyond dispute it was wrong what she contemplated, utterly wrong, and wild to madness; but the girl was ripe for such temptation and frail with a weakness consequent upon long years of deprivation. Full half of her heart's desire was here, free to her covetous fingers a queen's trousseau of beautiful belongings.

"It's only for an hour. No one need ever know. I'll leave everything just as I found it. And I'm so uncomfortable!"

She hesitated a moment longer, but only a moment; of a sudden smoldering embers of jealousy and desire broke into devastating flame, consuming doubts and scruples in a trice. Swift action ensued; this was

no more an affair of conscience, but of persuasion and resistless impulse. She flew about like one possessed—as, indeed, she was, no less.

Her first move was to turn on hot water in the shining porcelain tub. Then, instinctively closing and locking the hall door, she slipped from her despised garments and, hanging them up to dry in a tiled corner where their dampness could harm nothing, slipped into the bath.

Half an hour later, deliciously caressed by garments of soft white silk beneath a feather-weight *robe-de-chambre*, she sat before the dressing-table, drying her hair in the warm draft of an electric fan and anointing face, hands, and arms with creams and delicately scented lotions.

A faint smile touched lips now guiltless of any hint of sullenness; she hummed softly to herself, whose heart had almost forgotten its birthright of song and laughter; never the least pang of conscience flawed the serene surface of her content.

Properly dressed, her hair was beautiful, soft, fine, and plentiful, with a natural wave that lent an accent to its brownish luster. When she finished arranging it to her complete satisfaction she hardly knew the face that smiled back at her from the mirror's depths. Miraculously it seemed to have gained new lines of charm; its very thinness was now attractive, its color unquestionably intrinsic; and her eyes were as the eyes of a happy child, exulting in the attainment of long-coveted possessions.

It wasn't in human nature to contemplate this transformation and feel contrition for whatever steps had been necessary to bring it about.

And when she could do no more to beautify her person Sally turned again to the clothes-presses, by now so far gone in self-indulgence, her moral sense so insidiously sapped by the sheer sensual delight she had of all this pilfered luxury, that she could contemplate without a qualm less venial experiments with the law of *meum et tuum*.

She entertained, in short, a project whose lawless daring enchanted her imagination, if one as yet of vague detail. But with command of the resources of this wonderful wardrobe, what was to prevent her from appropriating a suitable costume and stealing forth, when the storm had passed, to seek adventure, perhaps to taste for a night those joys she had read about

and dreamed about, longed for and coveted, all her life long? Nothing could be more mad; there was no telling what might not happen; there was every warrant for believing that the outcome might be most unpleasant. But adventures are to the adventurous, and surely this one had started off propitiously enough.

"And what I need she'll never miss. Besides, I can send back everything in the morning, anonymously, by parcel-post. It's only borrowing."

Already she had passed from contemplation to purpose and stood committed to the enterprise, reckless of its consequences.

But she found it far from easy to make her selection; it wouldn't do to fare forth *en décolletée* without an escort—a consideration that sadly complicated the search for just the right thing, at once simple and extravagant, modish and becoming. Moreover, any number of captivating garments positively demanded to be tried on, then clung tenaciously to her pretty shoulders, refusing to be rejected.

She wasted many a sigh over her choice, which was ultimately something darkish, a frock (I think) of dark-blue *crêpe-de-chine*, designed primarily for afternoon wear, but, supplemented by a light silk wrap, quite presentable for evening; and it fitted to admiration.

This question once settled, she experienced little trouble finding slippers and a hat to her taste.

The testimony of a small gilt clock startled her when at length she stood ready for the next step in her nefarious career—the hour-hand was passing ten. That seemed almost impossible.

Running into the unlighted boudoir, she caught back the window-draperies, raised the sash, and peered cautiously out through the slanted slats of the wooden blinds.

The sky that now shone down upon the city was a fair shield of stars unblurred by cloud; the storm had passed without her knowledge.

Closing the window, Sally delayed for one last, rapturous survey of herself in the cheval-glass, then put out the lights and went to the door.

She hardly knew why it was that she opened it so gently and waited so long upon the threshold, every nerve tensed to detect alien sound in the stillness of the empty house. But it was as if with darkness those vacant rooms and passages had

become populous with strange, hostile spirits. She heard nothing whatever, yet it was with an effect of peril strong upon her senses that she stole forth through the hallway and up the stairs to the topmost floor, where, perched precariously upon the iron ladder, she tried her patience sorely with a stubborn scuttle-cover before recalling the click that had accompanied its closing—the click of a spring-latch.

But this last, when gropingly located, proved equally obdurate; she fumbled doggedly until back and limbs ached with the strain of her position; but her fingers lacked cunning to solve the secret; and in the end, when on the point of climbing down to fetch matches, she heard a sound that chilled her heart and checked her breath in a twinkling—an odd, scuffling noise on the roof.

At first remote and confused, it drew nearer and grew more clear—a sound of light footfalls on the sheet-tin.

Her self-confidence and satisfaction measurably dashed, she climbed down, so fearful of betraying herself to the person on the roof that she went to the absurd extreme of gathering her skirts up tightly to still their silken murmur.

Now she must leave by the street. And now she remembered the policeman who kept nightly vigil at the avenue crossing!

She was beginning to be definitely frightened, vividly picturing to herself the punishment that must follow detection.

And as she crept down-stairs, guided only by the banister-rail, the sense of her loneliness and helplessness there in that strange, dark place worked upon the temper of the girl until her plight, however real, was exaggerated hideously and endowed with terrors so frightful that she was ready to scream at the least alarm.

### CHAPTER III

#### ACCESSORY AFTER THE FACT

At the foot of the stairs Sally paused in the entry-hall, thoughtfully considering the front door, the pale rectangle of whose plate-glass was stenciled black with the pattern of its lace panel. But she decided against risking that avenue of escape; it would be far less foolhardy to steal away *via* the basement, unostentatiously, that the always-possible passer-by might more readily take her for a servant.

Turning back, then, toward the basement staircase, she began to grope her way through blinding darkness, but had taken only a few uncertain steps when, of a sudden, she stopped short and for a little stood like a stricken thing, quite motionless save that she quaked to her very marrow in the grasp of a great and enervating fear.

If she could not have said what precisely it was that she feared, her fright was no less desperately real. She could see nothing; she had heard no sound; her hands had touched nothing more startling than the banister-rail, and yet—

It was as if sensitive filaments of perceptions even finer than sight, touch, and hearing had found and recoiled from something strange and terrible skulking there, masked by the encompassing murk.

Probably less than twenty seconds elapsed, but it seemed a long minute before her heart stirred anew, leaping into action with a quickened beat, and she was able to reassert command of her reason and—reassured, persuaded her fright lacked any real foundation—move on.

Five paces more brought her to the elbow of the rail; here, in the very act of turning to follow it down to the basement, she halted involuntarily, again transfixed with terror.

But this time her alarm had visible excuse; that there was something wrong in that strange house, so strangely deserted, was evident beyond dispute.

She stood facing the dining-room door, the door to the library on her left; if not in any way evident to her senses, she could fix its position only approximately by an effort of memory. But through the former opening her vision, ranging at random, instinctively seeking relief from the oppression of blank darkness, detected a slender beam of artificial light no thicker than a lead-pencil—a golden blade that lanced the obscurity, gleaming dull upon a rug, more bright on naked parquetry, vivid athwart the dust-cloth shrouding the dining-table.

For a moment or two the girl lingered, unstimulating, fascinated by that slender, swerveless ray; then, slowly, holding her breath, urged against her will by importunate curiosity, she crossed the threshold of the dining-room, following the light back to its source—a narrow crack in the folding doors communicating with the library.

Now Sally remembered clearly that the folding doors had been wide open at the time of her first tour of investigation; as, indeed, had the door between the library and hall—now tight shut, else this light would have been perceptible in the hall as well.

It was undeniable, then, that since she had closeted herself up-stairs another person had entered the house—some one who had shut himself up there in the library for a purpose apparently as clandestine as her own. Or why such pains to mask the light, and why such care not to disturb the silence of the house?

To have gone on and made good an escape without trying to read this riddle would have been hardly human of the girl, for all her misgivings; she stole on to the folding doors with less noise than a mouse had made and put an eye to the crack, which, proving somewhat wider than she had anticipated, afforded a fair view of the best part of the other room.

An electric chandelier was on full-blaze above the broad and heavy center-table of mahogany, beyond which, against the farther wall, stood on the one hand a bookcase, on the other a desk of the roll-top type—closed. Above each of these the wall was decorated with trophies of ancient armor; between them hung a huge canvas in a massive gilt frame—the portrait of a beautiful woman beautifully painted. And immediately beneath the portrait stood a young man, posed in profound abstraction, staring at the desk.

He rested lightly against the table, his back square to Sally's view, revealing a well-turned head thatched with dark hair, clipped snugly by well-formed ears, and the salient line of one lean, brown cheek. But even so, with his countenance hidden, something conveyed a strong impression to the girl of a perplexed and disconcerted humor.

She was frankly disappointed. For some reason she had expected to discover a burglar of one or another accepted type—either a dashing cracksmen in full-blown evening dress, lithe, polished, pantherish, or a common yegg, a red-eyed, unshaven, burly brute in the rags and tatters of a tramp. But this man wore unromantic blue serge upon a person neither fascinating nor repellent. She could hardly imagine him either stealing a diamond tiara or hopping a freight.

But that he was of a truly criminal disposition she was not permitted long to doubt; for in another moment he started from his pensive pose with the animation of one inspired, strode alertly to the wall, stepped up on the seat of a chair beside the desk, and straining on tiptoes (though tolerably tall) contrived to grasp the handle of a short-bladed Roman sword which formed part of one of the trophies.

With some difficulty and, in the end, a grunt of satisfaction, he worked the weapon loose and, jumping down, turned to the desk, thrust the point of the sword between the writing-pad and the edge of the roll-top, forced the blade well in, and bore all his weight upon the haft of this improvised jimmy. Promptly, with a sound of rending wood, the top flew half-way up.

At this the man released the sword, which fell with a thump to the rug at his feet, pushed the top as far back as it would go, and, bending over the desk, explored its rack of pigeonholes and drawers. One of the latter eventually yielded the object of his search; he took from it first a small automatic pistol, which he placed carelessly to one side, then a small leather-bound book whose pages he thumbed in nervous haste, evidently seeking some memorandum essential to his ends. This found, he paused, conned it attentively for an instant, then turned and took the book with him across the room beyond the bookcase, thus vanishing from the field of Sally's vision.

Now was her chance to slip down-stairs and, undetected, away. But, surprisingly enough, she proved of two minds about advantaging herself of the opportunity. To begin with, she was no more afraid—at least, not to any great extent. What, she argued scornfully, was one man, after all?—especially one who had no more lawful business than she upon those premises! She wasn't afraid of men, and even were this one to catch her watching him (something Sally meant to take good care he shouldn't) he could hardly denounce her to the police. Besides, what *was* he up to, anyhow, over there in that corner, out of sight? She simply had to know the meaning of those noises he was making.

They were difficult to diagnose—an odd whirring sound broken by repeated muffled clanks and by several others as baffling, notably a muted metallic knocking and rattling.

She experienced an exasperating effect of trying to see round a corner.

But in the end she identified those sounds beyond mistake: the man was fretting the combination of a safe, pausing now and again to try the handle. For what, indeed, had he forced that desk if not to find the combination?

In due course the noises ceased and the malefactor reappeared, bringing with him a morocco-bound box of good size. She made no doubt whatever that this was a jewel-case, and took his smile for confirmation of her surmise, though it was really less a smile than satisfaction twitching the full lips beneath his dark little mustache (one of those modishly flat affairs so widely advertised by collar manufacturers).

For now the miscreant was facing Sally as he bent over the table and fumbled with the lock of the jewel-case, and she made good use of this chance to memorize a countenance of mildly sardonic cast, not unhandsome—the face of a conventional modern voluptuary, self-conscious, self-satisfied, selfish—rather attractive withal in the eyes of an excited young woman.

But a moment later, finding the case to be fast-locked, the burglar gave utterance to an exclamation that very nearly cost him his appeal to her admiration. She couldn't hear distinctly, for the impatient monosyllable was breathed rather than spoken, but at that distance it sounded damnably like "*Pshaw!*"

And immediately the man turned back to the desk to renew his rummaging—in search of a key to fit the case, she guessed. But his business there was surprisingly abbreviated—interrupted in a fashion certainly as startling to him as to her who skulked and spied on the dark side of the folding doors.

Neither received the least intimation that the door from the library to the hall had been opened. Sally, for one, remained firmly persuaded that they two were alone in the silent house until the instant when she saw a second man hurl himself upon the back of the first—a swift-moving shape of darkness, something almost feline in his grim, violent fury that afforded the victim no time either to turn or lift a hand in self-defense. In a twinkling the two went headlong to the floor and disappeared, screened by the broad top of the center-table.

There, presumably, Blue Serge recov-



ered sufficiently from the shock of surprise to make some show of fighting back. Confused sounds of scuffling and hard breathing became audible, with a thump or two deadened by the rug; but more than that, nothing—never a word from either combatant. There was something uncanny in the silence of it all.

For an instant Sally remained where she was, rooted in fright and wonder; but the next, and without in the least understanding how she had come there, she found herself by the open door in the entry-hall, just beyond the threshold to the library, commanding an unobstructed view of the conflict.

Apparently this neared its culmination. Though he had gone down face forward, Blue Serge had contrived to turn over on his back, in which position he now lay, still struggling, but helpless, beneath the bulk of his assailant—a burly, black-avised scoundrel, who straddled the chest of his prey, a knee pinning down either arm, both hands busy with efforts to make an unappetizing bandanna serve as a gag.

Pardonably rewarded for this inconsiderate treatment, the fat one suddenly snatched one hand away, conveyed a bitten finger to his mouth, instantly spat it out together with a gust of masterful profanity and, the other taking advantage of the opportunity to renew his struggles, shifted his grip to Blue Serge's throat and, bending forward, strove with purpose undoubtedly murderous to get possession of the short Roman sword.

It lay just an inch beyond his reach. He strained his utmost toward it, almost touched its haft with eager finger-tips.

At this a strange thing happened—strangest of all to Sally. For she, who never in her life had touched firearm or viewed scene of violence more desperate than a schoolboy squabble, discovered herself inside the library, standing beside the desk and leveling at the head of the heavy villain the automatic pistol that had rested there.

Simultaneously she was aware of the sound of her own voice, its accents perhaps a bit shaky, but none the less sharp, crying: "Stop! Don't you dare! Drop that sword and put up your hands! I say, put up your hands!"

The stout assassin started back and turned up to the amazing apparition of her a ludicrous mask of astonishment, eyes

agoggle, mouth agape, pendulous, beard-rusty chin aquiver like some unsavory sort of jelly. Then slowly—thanks to something convincing in the manner of this young woman, aflame as she was with indignant championship of the under dog—he elevated two grimy hands to a point of conspicuous futility; and a husky whisper, like a stifled roar, rustled past his lips:

"Well, can yuh beat it?"

A thrill of self-confidence galvanized the person of Miss Manvers, steadying at once her hand and her voice.

"Get up!" she snapped. "No—keep your hands in sight. Get up somehow, and be quick about it!"

Without visible reluctance, if with some difficulty, like a clumsy automaton animated by unwilling springs, the fat scoundrel lurched awkwardly to his feet and paused.

"Very good." She was surprised at the cold, level menace of her tone. "Now stand back—to the wall! Quick!"

She was abruptly interrupted by a vast, discordant bellow: "Look out, lady! Look out! That gun might go off!"

And as if hoping by that sudden and deafening roar to startle her off guard, the man started toward her, but pulled up as quickly, dashed and sullen. For she did not flinch an inch.

"That's your lookout!" she retorted incisively. "If you're afraid of it—stand back and keep your hands up!"

With a flicker of a sheepish grin the rogue obeyed, falling back until his shoulders touched the wall and keeping his hands level with his ears.

Still holding the pistol ready, the girl shifted her glance to Blue Serge.

He had already picked himself up, and now stood surveying his ally with a regard which wavered between amaze and admiration, suspicion and surprise. Meanwhile he felt gingerly of his throat, as if it were still sore, and nervously endeavored to readjust a collar which had broken from its moorings. Catching her inquiring eye, he bowed jerkily.

"Thanks!" he panted. "I—ah—good of you, I'm sure—"

She checked him coolly: "Take your time—plenty of it, you know—get your breath and pull yourself together."

He laughed uncertainly. "Ah—thanks again. Just a minute. I'm—ah—as dumfounded as grateful, you know."



She nodded with a curtness due to disillusionment; the man was palpably frightened; and, whatever his excuse, a timid *Raffles* was a sorry object in her esteem at that instant. She had anticipated of him—she hardly knew what—something brilliant, bold, and dashing, something as romantic as one has every right to expect of a hero of romantic fiction. But this one stood panting, trembling, “sparring for wind,” for all the world like any commonplace person fresh from rough handling!

It was most disappointing, so much so that she conceded grudgingly the testimony of her senses to the rapidity with which he regained his normal poise and command of resource, for one evidence of which last she noted that he backed up to the center-table with a casual air, as if needing its support, and with a deft, certain, swift gesture slipped the jewel-case into his coat-pocket. And she noted, too, a flash of anxiety in his eyes, as if he were wondering whether she had noticed.

At this she lost patience. “Well?” she said brusquely, “if you’ve had time to think—”

“To be sure,” Blue Serge returned easily. “You mean, about this gentleman? If you ask me, I think he’d be far less potentially mischievous facing the wall.”

“All right,” Sally agreed, and added with a fine flourish of the pistol: “Face about, you!”

With flattering docility the fat rascal faced about.

“And now,” Blue Serge suggested, “by your leave—”

Drawing near the girl, he held out his hand for the pistol, and to her own surprise she surrendered it without demur, suddenly conscious that he was no more afraid, that he was rapidly assuming comprehensive command of the situation beyond her to gainsay, and that he knew, and knew that she knew he knew, that she had never entertained any real intention of pulling the trigger, however desperate the emergency might become.

And incontinently, as though he had taken away all her courage, together with that nickel-plated symbol, she started back, almost cringing in a panic of sadly jangled nerves.

Happily for her conceit, once he had disarmed her, Blue Serge transferred his interest exclusively to his late assailant.

Calmly showing the girl his back, he

stepped over, poked the pistol’s nose significantly into the folds of the ruffian’s neck, and with a sharp word of warning slapped smartly his two hip-pockets; in consequence of which singular performance he thrust a hand beneath the tail of the fellow’s coat and brought away a bulldog revolver of heavy caliber.

And then he stepped back, smiling, with a sidelong glance of triumph for Sally’s benefit—a glance that spent itself on emptiness.

For Sally was no more there; her uninstructed fingers were already fumbling with the fastenings of the front door when Blue Serge discovered her defection.

## CHAPTER IV

### BLACKMAIL

THERE was a breathless instant while the combination of knobs, bolts, and locks defied her importunity so obstinately that Sally was tempted to despair.

She dared not look behind her; but momentarily, as she groped, fumbled, and trembled at the front door, she was aware that a man had backed out of the library into the hall and paused there in the gush of light, staring after her.

And when the door suddenly yielded she heard—or fancied that she heard—his voice, its accent peremptory: “Stop!” Or perhaps it was: “Wait!”

But she did neither; the door slammed behind her with a crash that threatened its glass; she was at the foot of the front steps before that sound had fairly registered on her consciousness; and her panic-winged heels had carried the young woman well round the corner and into Park Avenue before she appreciated how interesting her tempestuous flight from that rather thoroughly burglarized mansion would be apt to seem to a peg-post policeman. And then she pulled up short, as if reckoning to divert suspicion with a semblance of nonchalance—now that she *had* escaped!

But a covert glance aside brought prompt reassurance; after all, the gods were not unkind; the policeman was just then busy on the far side of the avenue, hectoring humility into the heart of an unhappy taxicab operator who had, presumably, violated some minor municipal ordinance.

Inconsistently enough—so strong is the habit of a law-abiding mind—the sight of that broad, belted, self-sufficient back, symbolic of the power and sanity of the law, affected Sally with a mad impulse to turn, hail the officer, and inform him of the conditions she had just quitted. And she actually swerved aside, as if to cross the avenue, before she realized how difficult it would be to invoke the law without implicating herself most damningly.

Recognition of that truth was like receiving a dash of ice-water in her face; she gasped, cringed, and scurried on up Park Avenue as if hoping to outdistance thought. A forlorn hope, that; refreshed from its long rest (for since the storm she had been little better than the puppet of emotions, appetites, and inarticulate impulses), her mind had resumed its normal functioning.

Inexorably it analyzed her plight and proved that what she had conceived in an hour of discontent and executed on the spur of an envious instant could nevermore be undone. What had been planned to be mere temporary appropriation of an outfit of clothing—"to be returned in good order, reasonable wear and tear excepted"—was one thing; safe-breaking, with the theft of Heaven only knew what treasure, was quite another. As to that, had she not been guilty of active complicity in the greater crime? How could she be sure (come to think of it) that the stout man had not been the lawful caretaker rather than a rival housebreaker?

She had indeed begun to be adventuress with a vengeance!

The police were bound to learn of the affair all too soon; her part in it was as certain to become known; too late she was reminded that the name "Manvers" indelibly identified every garment abandoned in the bath-room! Before morning certainly, before midnight probably, Sarah Manvers would be the quarry of a clamorous hue and cry.

Appalled, she hurried on aimlessly, now and again breaking into desperate little jog-trots, with many a furtive glance over shoulder, with as many questing roundabout for refuge or resource.

But the city of that night wore a visage new and strange to her, and terrifying. The very quietness of those few residential blocks, marooned amid ever-rising tides of trade, had an ominous accent. All the

houses seemed to have drawn together, cheek by jowl, in secret conference on her case, sloughing their disdainful daytime pose and following her fugitive, guilty figure with open amusement and contempt. Some (she thought) leered hideously at her, others scowled, others again assumed a scornful cast; one and all pretended to a hideous intelligence, as though they knew and, if they would, could say what and why she fled.

It was as if the storm had been a supernatural visitation upon the city, robbing it of every intimate, homely aspect, leaving it inhumanly distorted in an obsession of abominable enchantment.

With the start of one suddenly delivered from dream-haunted sleep, she found herself arrived at Forty-Second Street, and safe; none pursued her, nothing in her manner proclaimed the new-fledged malefactor; she need only observe ordinary circumstances to escape notice altogether. And for several moments she remained at a complete standstill there on the corner, blocking the fairway of foot traffic and blindly surveying the splendid façade of Grand Central Station, spellbound in wonder at the amazing discovery that Providence did not always visit incontinent retribution upon the heads of sinners—since it appeared that she who had sinned was to escape scot-free!

With this she was conscious of a flooding spirit of exultant impenitence; the deadly monotony of her days was done with once and for all. It mattered little that—since it were suicidal to return to the studio, the first place the police would search for her—she was homeless, friendless, penniless; it mattered little that she was hungry (now that she remembered it) and had not even a change of clothing for the morrow; these things would somehow be arranged—whether by luck or by virtue of her wit—they *must*!

All that really mattered was that the commonplace was banished from her ways, that she was alive, foot-loose and fancy-free, finally and definitely committed to the career of an adventuress!

Paradoxically, she was appalled by contemplation of her amazing callousness; outlawed, *declassée*, she was indifferent to her degradation, and alive only to the joy of freedom from the bondage of any certain social status.

Now, as she lingered on the corner, peo-

ple were passing her continually on their way over to the terminal; and one of these presently caught her attention—a man who, carrying a small oxford hand-bag, came up hastily from behind, started to cross the street, drew back barely in time to escape annihilation at the wheels of a flying squadron of taxicabs, and so for a moment waited, in impatient preoccupation with his own concerns, only a foot or two in advance but wholly heedless of the girl.

Sally caught her breath sharply, and her wits seemed to knit together with a sort of mental click; the man was Blue Serge, identified unmistakably to her eyes by the poise of his blue-clad person—the same Blue Serge who owed his life to Sally Manvers!

In another instant the way cleared and the man moved smartly on again, with every indication of one spurred on by an urgent errand—but went no more alone. Now a pertinacious shadow dogged him to the farther sidewalk, into the yawning vestibule of the railway station, on (at a trot) through its stupendous lobbies, even to the platform gates that were rudely slammed in his face by implacable destiny in the guise and livery of a gateman.

At this, pausing a little to one side, Sally watched Blue Serge accost the gateman, argue, protest, exhibit tickets, and finally endeavor to bribe a way past the barrier. But the train was already pulling out; with a shake of his stubborn head the uniformed guardian moved on, and ruminating on a power of pent profanity, Blue Serge turned and strode back into the waiting-room, passing so near to Sally that their elbows almost touched without his rousing to the least recognition of her existence.

But that in itself was nothing to dismay or to check the girl in her purpose, and when Blue Serge a minute later addressed himself to the Pullman bureau she was still his shadow—an all but open eavesdropper upon his communications with the authority of the brass-barred wicket.

"I've just missed the eleven ten for Boston," she heard him explain as he displayed tickets on the marble ledge, "and, of course, I'm out my berth reservation. Can you give me a lower on the midnight express?"

"No," Authority averred with becoming sententiousness.

"An upper, then?"

"Nothing left on the midnight."

"Not even a stateroom?"

"I told you nothing doing."

"Well, then, perhaps you can fix me up for the Owl train?"

"Wait a minute."

A pause ensued while Authority consulted his records; not a long pause, but one long enough to permit a wild, mad inspiration to flash like lightning athwart the clouded horizon of Sally's doubt and perplexity. Surely it were strangely inconsistent with her rôle of adventuress to permit this man to escape, now that destiny had delivered him into her unscrupulous hands!

"Owl train? *De luxe* room or ordinary stateroom—all I got left."

"Good enough. I'll take—"

If Blue Serge failed promptly to nominate his choice, it was only because Miss Manvers chose that juncture to furnish him—and incidentally herself, when she had time to think things over—with what was unquestionably for both of them the most staggering surprise of that most surprising night.

Peremptorily plucking a blue-serge sleeve with the brazenest impudence imaginable, she advised her victim:

"Take both, if you please!"

Had she schemed deliberately to strike him dumb in consternation, her success must have afforded Sally intense satisfaction. Since she hadn't, her personal consternation was momentarily so overpowering as to numb her sense of appreciation. So that for the period of a long minute neither of them moved nor spoke, but remained each with a blank countenance reflecting a witless mind, hypnotized by the stupefaction of the other.

Then perhaps a shade the quicker to recover, Sally fancied that her victim's jaw had slackened a bit and his color faded perceptibly; and with this encouragement she became herself again, collected, aggressive, confronting him undismayed, before recognition dawned upon Blue Serge, and, with it, some amused appreciation of her effrontery. Even so, his first essay at response was nothing more formidable than a stammered "I beg your pardon?"

She explained with absolute composure: "I said, take both rooms, please. *I'm* going to Boston, too."

"Oh!" he replied stupidly.

She nodded with determination and glanced significantly aside, with a little toss of her head, toward the middle of the lobby.

"There's a central office man over there," she observed obliquely, dissembling considerable uncertainty as to what a central office man really was, and why.

"There is!"

"If you go to Boston, I go," she persisted stolidly.

His countenance darkened transiently with distrust or temper. Then of a sudden the man was shaken by a spasm of some strange sort—the corners of his mouth twitched, his eyes twinkled, he lifted a quizzical eyebrow, his lips parted.

But whatever retort he may have contemplated was checked by the accents of Authority and the tapping of an imperative pencil on the window-ledge.

"Say, I'm busy. Which are you going to take now, *de luxe* room or—"

"Both!" With the dexterity of a stage conjurer Blue Serge whipped a bill from his pocket and thrust it beneath the wicket, not for an instant detaching his gaze from Sally. "And quick," said he; "I'm in a hurry!"

Grunting resentfully, Authority proceeded to issue the reservations, thus affording Sally, constrained to return without a tremor the steadfast regard of her burglar, time to appreciate the lengths to which bravado had committed her. And though she stood her ground without flinching, her cheeks had taken on a hue of bright crimson before Blue Serge, without troubling to verify them, seized tickets and change and turned squarely to her.

"Now that's settled," he inquired amiably, "what next?"

The better to cover her lack of a ready answer, she made believe to consult the mellow orb of the four-faced clock that rises above the bureau of information.

"The Owl train leaves when?" she asked with a finely speculative air.

"One o'clock."

"Then we've got over an hour and a half to wait!"

"How about a bite of supper? The station restaurant is just down-stairs—"

"Thank you," she agreed with a severe little nod.

Lugging his bag, he led the way with the air of one receiving rather than conferring a favor.

"Curious how things fall out," he observed cheerfully, "isn't it?"

"Yes—"

"I mean, your popping up like this just when I was thinking of you. Coincidence, you know."

"Coincidences," Sally informed him consciously, "are caviar only to book critics. There's nothing more common in real life."

He suffered this instruction with a mildly anguished smile.

"That's true, I presume, if one knows anything about real life. I don't go in for realistic novels, you see, so can't say. But you're right one way: it isn't anything extraordinary, come to consider it, that you and I, both headed for Boston, should run into each other here. By the way," he added with a casual air, "speaking of coincidences, it sort of triple-plated this one to have your friend from central office hanging round so handy, didn't it? If he's in sight, why not be a sport and tip me off?"

"I don't see the necessity," Sally returned, biting her lip, "yet."

"Not from your point of view, perhaps—from mine, yes. Forewarned is fortunate, you know."

"I dare say."

"You won't put me wise?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, of course, one can guess why."

"Can one?"

"Why, forgive me for calling your bluff, it wouldn't be safe, would it? Of course, I'm a sure-enough bad man—and all that. But you must be a bird of my feather, or you wouldn't flock together so unceremoniously."

Sally opened her eyes wide and adopted a wondering drawl known to have been of great service to Miss Lucy Spode: "Why, whatever do you mean?"

"Good!" Blue Serge applauded. "Now I *know* where I stand. That baby stare is the high sign of our fraternity—of black-birds. Only the guilty ever succeed in looking as transparently innocent. Too bad you didn't think of that in time."

"I don't follow you," she said truthfully, beginning to feel that she wasn't figuring to great advantage in this passage of repartee.

"I mean, your give-away is calculated to cramp your style; now you can't very well cramp mine, threatening to squeal."



"Oh, can't I?"

"No. I know you won't go through with it; not, that is, unless you're willing to face Sing Sing yourself. For that matter, I don't see how you're going to make Boston at all to-night, after that break, unless you go on your own; I don't believe I'm scared enough to stand for being shaken down for your transportation."

He was gaining the whip-hand much too easily. She averted her face to mask a growing trepidation and muttered sullenly: "What makes you think I'm afraid—"

"Oh, come!" he chuckled. "I know you hadn't any lawful business in that house, don't I?"

"How do you know it?"

"Because if you had, I would now be going peaceful with the kind policeman instead of being a willing victim of a very pleasant form of blackmail."

Burning with indignation and shivering a bit with fear of the man, she stopped short, midway down the ramp to the "lower level," and momentarily contemplated throwing herself upon his mercy and crawling out of it all with whatever grace she might; but his ironic and skeptical smile provoked her beyond discretion.

"Oh, very well!" she said ominously, turning, "if that's the way you feel about it, we may as well have this thing out now."

And she made as if to go back the way she had come; but his hand fell upon her arm with a touch at once light and imperative.

"Steady!" he counseled quietly. "This is no place for either bickering or bare-faced confidences. Besides, you mustn't take things so much to heart. I was only making fun, and you deserved as much for your cheek, you know. Otherwise, there's no harm done. If you hanker to go to Boston, go you shall, and no thanks to me. Even if I do pay the bill, I owe you a heap more than I'll ever be able to repay, chances are. So take it easy, and I say, do brace up and make a bluff, at least, of being on speaking terms. I'm not a bad sort, but I'm going to stick to you like grim death to a sick dork's bedside until we know each other better. That's flat, and you may as well resign yourself to it. And here we are."

Unwillingly, almost unaware, she had permitted herself to be drawn through the labyrinth of ramps to the very threshold

of the restaurant, where, before she could devise any effectual means of reasserting herself, a bland head waiter took them in tow and, at Blue Serge's direction, allotted them a table well over to one side of the room, out of ear-shot of their nearest neighbors.

Temporarily too fagged and flustered to react either to the danger or to the novelty of this experience, or even to think to any good purpose, Sally dropped mechanically into the chair held for her, wondering as much at herself for accepting the situation as at the masterful creature opposite, earnestly but amiably conferring with the head waiter over the bill of fare.

Surely a strange sort of criminal, she thought, with his humor and ready address, his sudden shifts from slang of the street to phrases chosen with a discriminating taste in English, his cool indifference to her threatening attitude, and his paradoxical pose of warm—it seemed—personal interest in and consideration for a complete and, to say the least, a very questionable stranger.

She even went so far as to admit that she might find him very likable, if only it were not for that affected little mustache and that semioccasional trick he practised of looking down his nose when he talked.

On the other hand, one assumed, all criminals must seem strange types to the amateur observer. Come to think of it, she had no standard to measure this man by, and knew no law that prescribed for such as he either dress clothing with an inverness and a mask of polished imperturbability, or else a pea-jacket, a pug-nose, a cauliflower ear, with bow legs and a rolling gait.

"There, I fancy that will do. But hurry it along, please."

"Very good, sir—immediately."

The head waiter ambled off, and Blue Serge faced Sally with an odd, illegible smile.

"At last!" he hissed in the approved manner of melodrama, "we are alone!"

She wasn't able to rise to his irresponsible humor. The impression lingered of a hand of steel beneath the velvet glove. Thus far her audacity seemed to have earned nothing but his derision. He was not in the least afraid of her—and *he* was a desperate criminal. Then what was she in his esteem?

Such thoughts drove home a fresh pain-



ful realization of her ambiguous personal status. It began to seem that she had been perhaps a little hasty in assuming she was to be spared punishment for her sin, however venial that might in charity be reckoned. Chance had, indeed, offered what was apparently a broad and easy avenue of escape; but her own voluntary folly had chosen the wrong turning.

Her hands were twisted tight together in her lap as she demanded with tense directness:

"What have you done with them?"

He lifted the ironic eyebrow. "*Them?*"

"The jewels. I saw you steal them—watched you from the dining-room, through the folding doors—"

"The deuce you did!"

"I saw you break open the desk—and everything."

"Well," he admitted fairly, "I'm jiggered!"

"What have you done with them?"

"Oh, the jewels?" he said with curious intonation. "Ah—yes, to be sure; the jewels, of course. You're anxious to know what I've done with them?"

"Oh, no," she countered irritably; "I only ask out of politeness."

"Thoughtful of you!" he laughed. "Why, they're outside, of course—in my bag."

"Outside?"

"Didn't you notice? I checked it with my hat, rather than have a row. I ought to be ashamed of myself, I know, but I'm a moral coward before a coat-room attendant. I remember keeping tabs one summer, and—will you believe me?—a common, ordinary, every-day three-dollar straw lid set me back twenty-two dollars and thirty cents in tips. But I hope I'm not boring you?"

"Oh, how can you?" she protested, lips tremulous with indignation.

"Don't flatter; I bore even myself at times."

"I don't mean that, and you know I don't. How can you sit there joking when you—when you've just—"

"Come off the job?" he caught her up as she faltered. "But why not? I feel anything but sad about it. It was a good job, wasn't it? a clean haul, a clear get-away. Thanks, of course, to you."

She responded, not without some difficulty: "Please! I wouldn't have dared if he hadn't tried to get at that sword."

"Just like him, too!" Blue Serge observed with a flash of indignation; "his kind, I mean—less burglars than bunglers, with no professional pride, no decent instincts, no human consideration. *They* never stop to think it's tough enough for a householder to come home to a cracked crib without finding a total stranger to boot—a man he's never even *seen* before, like as not—ah—weltering on the premises—"

"Oh, do be serious!"

"Must I? If you wish."

The man composed his features to a mask of whimsical attention.

"What—what did you do with him?" the girl stammered after a pause during which consciousness of her disadvantage became only more acute.

"Our active little friend, the yegg? Why, I didn't do anything with him."

"You didn't leave him there?"

"Oh, no; he went away, considerably enough—up-stairs and out through the scuttle—the way he broke in, you know. Surprisingly spry on his feet for a man of his weight and age—had all I could do to keep up. He did stop once, true, as if he'd forgotten something, but the sword ran into him—I happened thoughtlessly to be carrying it—only a quarter of an inch or so, and he changed his mind, and by the time I got my head through the scuttle he was gone—vanished completely from human ken!"

"He had broken the scuttle open, you say?"

"Pried it up with a jimmy."

"And you left it so? He'll go back."

"No, he won't. I found hammer and nails and made all fast before I left."

"But," she demanded, wide-eyed with wonder, "why did you take that trouble?"

"My silly conceit, I presume. I couldn't bear the thought of having that rough-neck return and muss up one of my neatest jobs."

"I don't understand you at all," she murmured, utterly confounded.

"Nor I you, if it matters. Still, I'm sure you won't keep me much longer in suspense, considering how open-faced I've been. But here's that animal of a waiter again."

She was willingly silent, though she exerted herself to seem at ease with indifferent success. The voice of her companion was like a distant, hollow echo in her hear-

ing; her wits were all awlirl, her nerves as taut and vibrant as banjo-strings; before her vision the face of Blue Serge swam, a flesh-tinted moon now and again traversed by a flash of white when he smiled.

"Come!" the man rallied her sharply, if in an undertone, "this will never do. You're as white as a sheet, trembling and staring, as if I were a leper or a relation by marriage or something repulsive!"

She sat forward mechanically and mustered an uncertain smile. "Forgive me. I'm a little overwrought—the heat and—everything."

"Not another word, then, till you've finished. I'll do the talking, if it's all the same to you. But you needn't answer—needn't listen, for that matter. I've no pride in my conversational powers, and you mustn't risk losing your appetite."

He seemed to find it easy enough to make talk, but Sally spared him little attention, being at first exclusively preoccupied with the demands of her hunger, and later, as the meal progressed, renewing her physical strength and turning the ebbing tide of her spirits, now thoroughly engaged with the problem of how to extricate herself from this embarrassing association or, if extrication proved impossible, how to turn it to her own advantage. For if the affair went on this way—*his* way—she were a sorry adventuress indeed.

Small cups of black coffee stood before them, steaming, when a question roused her, and she shook herself together and faced her burglar across the cloth, once more full mistress of her faculties.

"You're feeling better?"

"Very much," she smiled, "and thank you!"

"Don't make me uncomfortable; remember, this is all your fault."

"What—"

"That I'm here, alive and whole, able to enjoy a most unique situation. *Who are you?*"

But she wasn't to be caught by any such simple stratagem as a question plumped suddenly at her with all the weight of a rightful demand; she smiled again and shook her head.

"Sha'n't tell."

"But if I insist?"

"Why don't you, then?"

"Meaning insistence won't get me anything?"

Sensitive to the hint of a hidden trump, she stiffened slightly.

"I haven't asked you to commit yourself. I've got a right to my own privacy."

There fell a small pause. Lounging, an elbow on the table, a cigarette fuming idly between his fingers, the man favored her with a steady look of speculation whose challenge was modified only by the inextinguishable humor smoldering in his eyes—a look that Sally met squarely, dissembling her excitement. For with all her fears and perplexity she could never quite forget that, whatever its sequel, this was verily an adventure after her own heart, that she was looking her best in a wonderful frock and pitting her wits against those of an engaging rogue, that she who had twelve hours ago thought herself better dead was now living intensely an hour of vital emergency.

"But," the man said suddenly, and yet deliberately, "surely you won't dispute my right to know who makes free with my own home?"

Her bravado was extinguished as suddenly as a candle-flame in a gust of wind.

"*Your* home?" she parroted witlessly.

"Mine, yes. If you can forgive me."

He fumbled for his card-case. "It has been amusing to play the part you assigned me of amateur cracksman, but really, I'm afraid—it can't be done without a better make-up!"

He produced and placed before her on the cloth a small white card, and as soon as its neat black script ceased to writhe and run together beneath her gaze she comprehended the name of *Mr. Walter Arden Savage*, with a residence address identical with that of the house wherein her great adventure had begun.

"You!" she breathed aghast, "you're not *really* Mr. Savage?"

He smiled indulgently. "I rather think I am."

"But—"

Sally's voice failed her entirely, and he laughed a tolerant little laugh as he bent forward to explain.

"I don't wonder you are surprised—or at your mistake. The fact is, the circumstances *are* peculiar. It's my sister's fault, really; she's such a flighty little thing—unpardonably careless. I must have warned her a hundred times, if once, never to leave valuables in that silly old tin safe. But she won't listen to reason—never

would. And it's her house—her safe. I've got no right to install a better one. And that is why we're here."

He smiled thoughtfully down his nose. "It's really a chapter of accidents to which I'm indebted for this charming adventure," he pursued with a suavely personal nod, "beginning with the blow-out of the taxicab tire that made us five minutes late for this evening's boat. We were bound up the Sound, you understand, to spend a fortnight with a maternal aunt. And our luggage is well on its way there now. So when we missed the boat there was nothing for it but go by train. We taxied back here through that abominable storm, booked for Boston by the eleven ten, and ducked across the way to dine at the Biltmore. No good going home, of course, with the servants out—and everything. And just as we were finishing dinner this amiable sister of mine gave a whoop and let it out that she'd forgotten her jewels. Well, there was plenty of time. I put her aboard the train as soon as the sleepers were open—ten o'clock, you know—and trotted back home to fetch the loot."

A reminiscent chuckle punctuated his account, but struck no echo from Sally's humor. Moveless and mute, the girl sat unconsciously clutching the edge of the table as if it were the one stable fact in her whirling world; all her bravado dissipating as her daze of wonder yielded successively to doubt, suspicion, consternation.

"I said there was plenty of time, and so there was, barring accidents. But the same wouldn't be barred. I manufactured the first delay for myself, forgetting to ask Adele for the combination. I knew where to find it, in a little book locked up in the desk; but I hadn't a key to the desk, so felt obliged to break it open, and managed that so famously I was beginning to fancy myself a bit as a *Raffles* when, all of a sudden—*Pow!*" he laughed, "that fat devil landed on my devoted neck with all the force and fury of two hundredweight of professional jealousy!"

"And then," he added, "in you walked from God knows where—"

His eyes affixed the point of interrogation to the simple declarative.

She started nervously in response, divided between impulses which she had no longer sufficient wit to weigh. Should she confess, or try to lie out of it? Must she believe this glibly simple and adequate

account or reject it on grounds of pardonable skepticism?

If this man were what he professed to be, surely he must recognize her borrowed plumage as his sister's property. True, that did not of necessity follow; men have so little understanding of women's clothing; it pleases them or it displeases, if thrust upon their attention, but once withdrawn it is forgotten utterly. Such might well be the case in this present instance; the man gave Sally, indeed, every reason to believe him as much bewildered and mystified by her as she was by him.

On the other hand, and even so—

The infatuate impulse prevailed, to confess and take the consequences.

"I'm afraid—" she began in a quaver.

"No need to be—none I know of, at least," he volunteered promptly, if without moderating his exacting stare.

"You don't understand—"

She hesitated, sighed, plunged in desperation. "It's no use; there's nothing for me to do but own up. What you were not to-night, Mr. Savage, I was."

"Sounds like a riddle to me. What is the answer?"

"You were just make-believe. I was the real thing—a real thief. No, let me go on; it's easier if you don't interrupt. Yes, I'll tell you my name, but it won't mean anything. I'm nobody. I'm Sarah Manvers. I'm a shop-girl out of work."

"Still I don't see—"

"I'm coming to that. I live on your block—the Lexington Avenue end, of course—with two other girls. And this afternoon—the studio was so hot and stuffy and lonesome, with both my friends away—I went up on the roof for better air, and fell asleep there and got caught by the storm. Somebody had closed the scuttle, and I ran across roofs looking for another that wasn't fastened down, and when I found one—it was your house—I was so frightened by the lightning I hardly knew what I was doing. I just tumbled in—"

"And welcome, I'm sure," Blue Serge interpolated.

She blundered on, unheeding: "I went all through the house, but there wasn't anybody, and—I was so wet and miserable that I—made myself at home—decided to take a bath and—and borrow some things to wear until my own were dry. And then I thought—"

She halted, confused, realizing how impossible it would be to convince anybody with the tale of her intention merely to borrow the clothing for a single night of arabesque adventure, finding it difficult now to believe in on her own part, and hurried breathlessly on to cover the hiatus.

"And then I heard a noise on the roof. I had closed the scuttle, but I was frightened. And I crept down-stairs and—saw the light in the library and— That's all."

And when he didn't reply promptly, she added with a trace of challenge: "So now you know!"

He started as from deep reverie.

"But why call yourself a thief—for that?"

"Because—because—" Her overstrung nerves betrayed her in gusty confession. "Because it's no good blinking facts; that's what I was in my heart of hearts. Oh, it's all very well to be generous, and for me to pretend I meant only to borrow, and—and all that! But the truth is, I did steal—and I never honestly meant to send the things back. At first—yes; then I meant to return them, but never once they were on my back. I told myself I did, I believed I did; but deep down, all along, I didn't, I didn't, I didn't! I'm a liar as well as a thief!"

"Oh, come now!" Blue Serge interjected in a tone of mild remonstrance, lounging back and eying the girl intently. "Don't be so down on yourself."

"Well, everything I've said was true except that one word 'borrow'; but that in itself was a lie big enough to eclipse every word of truth. You see, but you'll never understand—never! Men can't. They simply can't know what it is to be clothes-hungry—starving for something fit to wear—as I have been for years and years and years, as most of us in the shops are all our lives long."

"Perhaps I understand, though," he argued with an odd look. "I know what you mean, at any rate, even if I'm not ready to admit that shop-girls are the only people who ever know what it is to desire the unattainable. Other people want things, at times, just as hard as you do clothes."

"Well, but—" She stammered, unable to refute this reasonable contention, but, womanlike, persistent to try. "It's different—when you've never had anything. Try to think what it must be to work from

eight till six—sometimes later—six days a week, for just enough to keep alive on, if you call such an existence being alive! Why, in ten years I haven't seen the country or the sea—unless you count trips to Coney on crowded trolley-cars, and mighty few of them. I never could afford a vacation, though I've been idle often enough—never earned more than ten dollars a week, and that not for many weeks together. I've lived on as little as five—on as little as charity, on nothing but the goodness of my friends—at times. That's why, when I saw myself prettily dressed for once, and thought nothing could stop my getting away, I couldn't resist the temptation. I didn't know where I was going, dressed like this, and not a cent; but I was going some place, and I wasn't ever coming back!"

"Good Lord!" the man said gently. "Who'd blame you?"

"Don't sympathize with me," she protested, humanly quite unconscious of her inconsistency, "I don't deserve it. I'm caught with the goods on, literally, figuratively, and I've got to pay the penalty. Oh, I don't mean what you mean. I'm no such idiot as to think you'll have me sent to jail; you've been too kind already, and—and, after all, I did do you a considerable service; I did help you out of a pretty dangerous fix. But the penalty I'll pay is worse than jail: it's giving up these pretty things and all my silly, sinful dreams, and going back to that scrubby studio—and no job—"

She pulled up short, mystified by a sudden change in the man's expression, perceiving that she was no longer holding his attention as completely as she had. She remarked his look of embarrassment, that his eyes winced from something he saw beyond and unknown to her. But he was as ready as ever to recover and demonstrate that, if his attention had wandered, he hadn't missed the substance of her harangue, for when she paused he replied:

"Oh, perhaps not. Don't let's jump at conclusions. I've a premonition you won't have to go back. Here comes some one who'll have a word to say about that—or I don't know!"

And he was up before Sally had grasped his meaning—on his feet and bowing civilly, if with a twinkling countenance, to a woman who swooped down upon him in a sudden, wild flutter of words and gestures.



"Walter! Thank God I've found you! I've been so upset—hardly knew what to do—when you didn't show up."

What more she might have said dried instantly on the newcomer's lips as her gaze embraced Sally. She stiffened slightly and drew back, elevating her eyebrows to the frost-line.

"Who is this woman? What does this mean?"

Without awaiting an answer to either question, she observed in accents that had all the chilling force and cutting edge of a winter wind:

"My dress! My hat!"

## CHAPTER V

### CONSPIRACY

"My dear sister!" interposed Mr. Savage with an imitation so exact of the woman's tone that he nearly wrung a smile even from Sally. "Do calm yourself—don't make a scene. The matter is quite easy to explain—"

"But what—"

"Oh, give us a chance. But, permit me!" He bowed with his easy laugh. "Adele, this is Miss Manvers—Miss Manvers, my sister, Mrs. Standish. And now"—as Sally half started from her chair and Mrs. Standish acknowledged her existence by an embittered nod—"do sit down, Adele!"

With the manner of one whose amazement has paralyzed her parts of speech, the woman sank mechanically into the chair which Savage (having thoughtfully waved away the hovering waiter) placed beside the table, between himself and his guest. But once seated, precisely as if that position were a charm to break the spell that sealed them, promptly her lips reformed the opening syllables of "*What does this mean?*"

Mr. Savage, however, diplomatically gave her no chance to utter more than the first word.

"Do hold your tongue," he pleaded, with a rudeness convincingly fraternal, "and listen to me. I am deeply indebted to Miss Manvers—for my very life, in fact. Oh, don't look so blamed incredulous; I'm perfectly sober. Now *will* you please give me a show?"

And, the lady executing a gesture that matched well her look of blank resigna-

tion, her brother addressed himself to a terse summing up of the affair which, while it stressed the gravity of the adventure with the fat burglar, did not seem to extenuate Sally's offense in the least, and so had the agreeable upshot of leaving the sister in a much-placated humor and regarding the girl with a far more indulgent countenance than Sally had found any reason at first to hope for.

As for that young woman, the circumstance that she was inwardly all ashudder didn't in the least hinder her exercise of that feminine trick of mentally photographing, classifying, and cataloguing the other woman's outward aspects in detail and, at the same time, distilling her more subtle phases of personality in the retort of instinct and minutely analyzing the precipitate.

The result laid the last lingering ghost of suspicion that all was not as it should be between these two—that Blue Serge had not been altogether frank with her.

She had from the first appreciated the positive likeness between Mrs. Standish and the portrait in the library, even though her observation of the latter had been limited to the most casual inspection through the crack of the folding doors; there's wasn't any excuse for questioning the identification. The woman before her, like the woman of the picture, was of the slender, blond class—intelligent, neurotic, quick-tempered, inclined to suffer spasmodically from exaltation of the ego. And if she had not always been pampered with every luxury that money has induced modern civilization to invent, the fact was not apparent; she dressed with such exquisite taste as only money can purchase, if it be not innate; she carried herself with the ease of affluence founded upon a rock, while her nervousness was manifestly due rather to impatience than to the vice of worrying.

"And now," Mr. Savage wound up with a graceless grin, "if you'll be good enough to explain what the dickens you're doing here instead of being on the way to Boston by the eleven ten, I'll be grateful, Miss Manvers will quit doubting my veracity—secretly, if not openly—and we can proceed to consider something I have to suggest with respect to the obligations of a woman who has been saved the loss of a world of gewgaws as well as those of a man who is alive and whole exclusively,



thanks to—well, I think you know what I mean."

"Oh, as for that," said Mrs. Standish absently, "when you turned up missing on the train I stopped it at the Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Street station and came back to find out what was the matter. I've been all through this blessed place looking for you—"

"Pardon!" Mr. Savage interrupted. "Did I understand you to say you had stopped the train?"

"Certainly. Why not? You don't imagine I was going to let myself be carried all the way to Boston in ignorance—"

"Then, one infers, the eleven ten doesn't normally stop at One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Street?"

"No. I had to speak to the conductor. Do be quiet. It doesn't matter. What were you going to say?"

"Nothing much, except that the clothes Miss Manvers stands in are hardly to be considered an adequate reward."

"True. But you mentioned some suggestion or other—"

"Without being downright about it, thereby sparing Miss Manvers any embarrassment she might feel should you disapprove, as I'm confident you won't—"

This was the woman's turn; she silenced him with a gesture of infinite *ennui*. "Why is it," she complained, "that you never get anywhere without talking all around *Robin Hood's* barn?"

"Objection," Mr. Savage offered promptly, "on the ground of mixed metaphor."

"Objection sustained," his sister conceded. "But do come to the point."

"I wish only to remind you of the news imparted by our respected aunt in her letter of recent date."

The woman frowned slightly, as with mental effort; then a flash of comprehension lightened her blue eyes. Immediately her brows mutely circumflexed a question. A look of profound but illegible significance passed between the two. Mr. Savage nodded. Mrs. Standish pursed speculatively her thin, well-made-up lips and visibly took thought, according to the habit of her sex, by means of a series of intuitive explosions. Then she nodded vigorously and turned upon Miss Manvers a bewildering smile, for the first time addressing her directly.

"My dear," she said pleasantly enough—though, of course, the term had no ac-

cent whatever of affection—"this half-witted brother of mine once in a while stumbles upon the most brilliant inspiration imaginable. I'm sure he has seen enough of you in this last hour to be making no mistake in offering you as one answer to a very delicate question which has been distressing us both for a long time. If you're not overscrupulous—"

She paused with a receptive air.

"I'm sure I don't know what you're driving at," Sally said bluntly; "but I'm hardly in a position to be nice-minded about trifles."

"It's this way," Savage interposed; "we're offering you a chance to get away, to enjoy a summer by the seashore, to mix with a lot of mighty interesting people, and all that sort of thing—everything you tell me you've been pining for—if you'll consent to sail under false colors."

"Please!" Sally begged with a confused and excited little laugh.

"He simply can't help it; indirection is Walter's long suit," Mrs. Standish took up the tale. "First of all, you must know this aunt of ours is rather an eccentric—frightfully well off, spoiled, self-willed, and quite blind to her best interests. She's been a widow so long she doesn't know the meaning of wholesome restraint. She's got all the high knee action of a thoroughbred never properly broken to harness. She sets her own pace—and Heaven help the hindermost! All in all, I think Aunt Abby's the most devil-may-care person I've ever met."

"You're too modest," Mr. Savage commented abstractedly.

"Be quiet, Walter. Aunt Abby's passionately fond of two things—cards and what she calls 'interesting people.' Neither would matter much but for the other. She gambles for sheer love of it, and doesn't care a rap whether she wins or loses. And her notion of an interesting person is anybody fortunate or misfortunate enough to be noticed by the newspapers. A bit of a scandal is a sure bait for her regard—"

Pausing, Mrs. Standish smiled coolly. "Take me, for example. Until I found it necessary to get unmarried, my aunt never could find time to waste on me. But now, in spite of the fact that the decree was in my favor, I'm the object of her mad attachment. And if Walter hadn't come into the lime-light through a Senatorial inquiry into high finance, and made such a sick witness, and got so deservedly roasted by

the newspapers—well, now nothing is too good for him. So, you see, the people Aunt Abby insists on entertaining are apt to be a rather dubious lot. I don't mean she'd pick up with anybody openly immoral, you know; but she certainly manages to fill her houses—she's got several—with a wild crew of adventurers and—esses—to call 'em by their first names.

"They're smart enough, God knows, and they do make things hum, but they charge her—some of them—fat fees for the privilege of entertaining them. Funny things have happened at her card-tables. So Walter and I have been scheming to find some way to protect her without rousing her resentment by seeming to interfere. If we could only get evidence enough to talk privately to some of her friends—about time-tables, for instance—it would be all right. And only recently she herself showed us the way—wrote me that she had quarreled with her corresponding secretary, a spinster of acid maturity, and discharged her; and would we please look round for somebody to replace Miss Matring. Do you see?"

"You mean," Sally suggested, dumfounded, "you mean you'll recommend *me* for the position?"

"I'll do more. I'll see that you get it; I'll take you with me to-night, and by to-morrow noon you'll be engaged. But you must understand we're giving you the chance solely that you may serve us as well as Aunt Abby, by keeping your eyes and ears wide open and reporting to us in strictest confidence and secrecy anything that doesn't look right to you."

"But—but I—but how—why do you think you can trust me?" the girl faltered. "Knowing what you do—"

"That's just the point. Don't you see? We can trust you because you won't dare betray us."

"But—but after I've stolen—"

"Don't say it!" Savage cut in. "You stole nothing, if you please; you merely anticipated a reward for a service not yet rendered."

"But— Oh, it's kind of you, but don't you see it's impossible?"

"Nothing is impossible except your refusal," said Mrs. Standish. "Do be sensible, my dear, and realize that we—that I intend you shall have this chance. What can you possibly find to object to? The deceit? Surely an innocent deception,

practised upon a dear old lady for her own good!"

"Deceit," Mr. Savage propounded very sagely, "is like any other sin, it's only sinful when it is. That's elementary sophistry, but I invented it, and I'm strong for it. Besides, we've got just twenty minutes now to get aboard the Owl—and I've got to beg, borrow, or buy transportation on it, because there wasn't a room left but the two I bought for you and me—and now Adele will have to have one of the rooms—"

"But I've nothing to wear but these things!"

"Don't worry about that," Mrs. Standish reassured her. "I've got nine trunks on the way—and you unquestionably fill my things out like a woman with a perfect figure!"

"But how will you explain? Who am I to be? You can't introduce me as a shop-girl out of work whom you caught stealing your clothes!"

"*La nuit porte conseil*," Mr. Savage announced sagely, and with what was no doubt an excellent accent. "Let Adele sleep on it, and if she doesn't come through in the morning with a good, old-fashioned, all wool, yard-wide lie that will blanket every possible contingency, I don't know my little sister."

"An elder brother, let me tell you, Miss Manvers, is the best possible preceptor in prevarication."

"Elder!" exclaimed the outraged young man. "Well, of all—" He turned appealingly to Sally. "What did I tell you?"

## CHAPTER VI

### ALIAS MANWARING

FICKLE-MINDED fortune favored Mr. Savage's belated application for additional sleeping-car accommodation: somebody turned back a reservation only ten minutes or so before train-time, in consequence of which Mrs. Standish and Miss Manvers enjoyed adjoining compartments of luxury, while Mr. Savage contented himself with less pretentious quarters farther aft.

Thus it was that at one minute past one o'clock, when a preternaturally self-respecting porter dispassionately ascertained that nothing more would be required of him till morning and shut himself out of her presence, the girl subsided

upon the edge of a bed of such sybaritic character as amply to warrant the designation *de luxe*, and, flushed and trembling with excitement (now that she dared once again to be her natural self) and with all incredulity appropriate to the circumstances, stared at the young woman who stared blankly back from a long mirror framed in the door.

It was truly a bit difficult to identify that modishly dressed and brilliantly animated young person with S. Manvers of the hardware notions in Huckster's Bargain Basement, while reason tottered and common sense tittered when invited to credit the chain of accidents responsible for the transformation.

Strange world of magic romance, this, into which she had stumbled over the threshold of a venial misdemeanor! Who now would dare contend that life was ever sordid, grim, and cruel, indigestible from soup to savory? Who would have the hardihood to uphold such contention when made acquainted with the case of Sarah Manvers, yesterday's drudge, unlovely and unloved, to-day's child of fortune, chosen of a golden destiny?

Sally's jubilation was shadowed by a pensive moment; dare she assume that the winters of her discontent had been forever banished by the wave of chance's wand?

She shook a confounded head, smiled an uncertain smile, sighed a little, broken sigh, and with determination bade adieu to misgivings, turning a deaf ear to the dull growls of mother-wit arguing that the board of health ought to be advised about the state of Denmark. Sufficient unto the night its room *de luxe*; she found her couch no less comfortable for the sword that conceivably swayed above it, suspended by a thread of casual favor.

For a time she rested serenely in the dark—only half undressed in view of the ever-possible accident—cheek to pillow, face turned to the window that endlessly screened the sweeping mysteries of that dark, glimmering countryside, quite resigned so to while away the night, persuaded it was inevitable that one with so much to ponder should be unable to sleep a wink.

Deliberately, to prove this point, she closed her eyes.

And immediately opened them to broad daylight revealing, through that magic

casement, the outskirts of a considerable city, street after suburban street wheeling away like spokes from a restless hub.

A simultaneous pounding on the door warned her she had but ten minutes in which to dress; no time to grasp the substance of a dream come true, no time even to prepare a confident attitude with which to salute the fairy godparents of her social début—time only to struggle into her outer garments and muster a half-timid, deprecatory smile for those whom she was to find awaiting her in the corridor, impatient to be off, none too amiably conscious of foregone beauty sleep, accepting their protégée with a matter-of-course manner most disillusioning.

"Got to hurry, you know," Savage informed her brusksly; "only twenty minutes to snatch a bite before our train leaves for the island."

They hurried down a platform thronged with fellow passengers similarly haunted by the seven devils of haste, beneath a high, glazed, but opaque vault penning an unappetizing atmosphere composed in equal parts of a stagnant, warm air and stale steam, into a restaurant that had patently been up all night, through the motions of swallowing alternate mouthfuls of denatured coffee and dejected rolls, up again and out and down another platform—at last into the hot and dusty haven of a parlor-car.

Then impressions found time for readjustment. The journey promised, and turned out, to be by no means one of unalloyed delights. The early morning temper discovered by Mrs. Standish offered chill comfort to one like Sally, saturate with all the emotions of a stray puppy hankering for a friendly pat. Ensnared in the chair beside her charge, the patroness swung it coolly aside until little of her was visible but the salient curve of a pastel-tinted cheek and buried her nose in a best-selling novel, ignoring overtures analogous to the wagging of a propitiatory tail. While Savage, in the chair beyond his sister, betrayed every evidence of being heartily grateful for a distance that precluded conversation and to a Providence that tolerated *Town Topics*. Sally was left to improve her mind with a copy of *Vanity Fair*, from contemplation of whose text and pictures she emerged an amateur adventuress sadly wanting in the indispensable quality of assurance. It wasn't that she feared to

measure wits, intelligence, or even lineage with the elect. But in how many mysterious ways might she not fall short of the ideal of good form?

What—she pondered gloomily, chin in hand, eyes vacantly reviewing a countryside of notable charms adrowse in the lethargic peace of a midsummer morning—what the dickens was good form, anyway?

Nothing, not even her own normally keen power of observation, offered any real enlightenment.

She summed up an hour's studious reflection in the dubious conclusion that good form had something subtly to do with being able to sit cross-kneed and look arrogantly into the impertinent lens of a camp-follower's camera—to be impudently self-conscious, that is—to pose and pose and get away with it.

The train came to a definite stop, and Sally started up to find Mrs. Standish, afoot, smiling down at her with all her pretty features except her eyes, and Mr. Savage smiling in precisely the reverse fashion.

"All out," he announced. "Change here for the boat. Another hour, and—as somebody says Henry James says—there, in a manner of speaking, we all are."

They straggled across a wharf to a fussy, small steamer, Mrs. Standish leading the way with an apprehensive eye for possible acquaintances and, once established with her brother and Sally in a secluded corner of the boat's upper deck, uttering her relief in a candid sigh.

"Nobody we know aboard," she added, smiling less tensely at Sally.

"Eh—what say?" Mr. Savage inquired from a phase of hypnosis induced by a glimpse of good form in a tailored skirt of white corduroy.

"Nobody of any consequence in this mob," his sister paraphrased, yawning delicately.

"Oh," he responded with an accent of doubt. But the white corduroy vanished round a shoulder of the deck-house, and he bestirred himself to pay a little attention to Sally.

"That's the island," he said, languidly waving his hand. "That white-pillared place there among the trees—left of the lighthouse—that's Aunt Abby's."

Sally essayed a smile of intelligent response. Not that the island failed to enchant her; seen across a fast diminish-

ing breadth of wind-darkened blue water, bathed in golden mid-morning light, its villas of delicious gray half buried in billows of delicious green, its lawns and terraces crowning fluted gray-stone cliffs from whose feet a broad beach shelved gently into the sea, it seemed more beautiful to Miss Manvers than anything she had ever dreamed of.

But what was to be her reception there, what her status, what her fortunes?

"I've been thinking," Mrs. Standish announced when a sidelong glance had reassured her as to their practical privacy, "about Miss Manvers."

"I hope to Heaven you've doped out a good one," Savage interrupted fervently. "In the cold gray dawn it doesn't look so good to me. But then I'm only a duffer. Perhaps it's just as well; if I'd been a good liar I might have married to keep my hand in. As it is, I never forget to give thanks, in my evening prayers, for my talented little sister."

"Are you finished?" Mrs. Standish inquired frigidly.

"I'd better be."

"Then, please pay close attention, Miss Manvers. To begin with, I'm going to change your name. From now on it's Sara Manwaring—Sara without the *h*."

"Manwaring with the *w* silent, as in wrapper and wretch?" Savage asked politely.

For Sally's benefit Mrs. Standish spelled the word patiently.

"And the record of the fair impostor?" Savage prompted.

"That's very simple. Miss Manwaring came to me yesterday with a letter of introduction from Edna English. Edna sailed for Italy last Saturday, and by the time she's back Aunt Abby will have forgotten to question Miss Manwaring's credentials."

"What did I tell you?" Mr. Savage wagged a solemn head at Sally. "There's art for you!"

"She comes from a family prominent socially in"—Mrs. Standish paused a fraction of a second—"Massillon, Ohio—"

"Is there any such place?"

"Of course—"

"What a lot you do know, Adele!"

"But through a series of unhappy accidents involving the family fortunes was obliged to earn her own living."

"Is that all?"



"Isn't it enough?"

"Plenty. Simple, succinct, stupendous! It has only one flaw."

"And that, if you please?" Mrs. Standish demanded, bristling a trifle.

"It ain't possible for any one to be prominent socially in a place named Massillon, Ohio. It can't be done—not in a place I never heard of before."

"Do you understand, Miss Manwaring?" the woman asked, turning an impatient shoulder to her brother.

"Perfectly," Sally assented eagerly, "only—who is Edna English?"

"Mrs. Cornwallis English. You must have heard of her?"

"Oh, yes, in the newspapers—"

"Social uplift's her fad. She's done a lot of work among department-store girls."

"To their infinite annoyance," interpolated Savage.

"At all events, that's how she came to notice you."

"I see," said Sally humbly.

"You may fill in the outlines at your discretion," Mrs. Standish pursued sweetly. "That's all I know about you. You called at the house with the letter from Mrs. English yesterday afternoon, and I took a fancy to you and, knowing that Aunt Abby needed a secretary, brought you along."

"Thank you," said Sally. "I hope you understand how grate—"

"That's quite understood. Let us say no more about it."

"Considerable story," Savage approved. "But what became of the letter of introduction?"

"I mislaid it," his sister explained complacently. "Don't I mislay everything?"

For once the young man was dumb with admiration. But his look was eloquent.

Deep thought held the amateur adventuress spellbound for some minutes.

"There's only one thing," she said suddenly, with a puzzled frown.

"And that?" Mrs. Standish prompted.

"What about the burglary? Your servants, when they came home last night, must have noticed and notified the police."

"Oh, I say!" Savage exclaimed blankly.

"Don't let's worry about that," Mrs. Standish interrupted. "We can easily let it be understood that what was stolen was later recovered from—whatever they call the places where thieves dispose of their stealings."

"That covers everything," Savage insisted impatiently. "Do come along. There's the car waiting."

Coincident with this announcement a series of slight jars shook the steamer, and with a start Sally discovered that, without her knowledge in the preoccupation of being fitted with a completely new identity, the vessel had rounded a wooded headland and opened up a deep harbor dotted with pleasure craft, and was already nuzzling the town wharf of a sizable community.

She rose and followed her fellow conspirators aft and below to the gangway, her mind registering fresh impressions with the rapidity of a motion-picture camera.

The gray cliff had given place to green-clad bluffs sown thick with cottages of all sorts, from the quaintly hideous and the obviously inexpensive to the bewitchingly pretty and the pretentiously ornate—a haphazard arrangement that ran suddenly into a plot of streets linking a clutter of utilitarian buildings, all converging upon the focal point of the village wharf.

Upon this last a cloud of natives and summer folk swarmed and buzzed. At its head a cluster of vehicles, horse-drawn as well as motor-driven, waited. In the shadow beneath it, and upon the crescent beach that glistened on its either side, a multitude of children, young and old, paddled and splashed in shallows and the wash of the steamer.

Obviously the less decorative and exclusive side of the island, it was none the less enchanting in Sally's vision. A measure of confidence reinfused her mood. She surrendered absolutely to fatalistic enjoyment of the gifts the gods had sent. Half closing her eyes, she drank deep of salt-sweet air vibrant with the living warmth of a perfect summer's day.

A man whose common face was as impassive as an Indian's shouldered through the mob and burdened himself with the hand-luggage of the party. Sally gathered that he was valet to Mr. Savage. And then they were pushing through the gantlet of several hundred curious eyes and making toward the head of the pier.

"Trying," Mrs. Standish observed in an aside to the girl. "I always say that everything about the island is charming but the getting here."

Sally murmured an inarticulate response and wondered. Disdain of the commonalty



was implicit in that speech; it was contact with the herd, subjection to its stares, that Mrs. Standish found so trying. How, then, had she brought herself so readily to accept association on almost equal terms with a shop-girl misdemeanor—out of gratitude, or sheer goodness of heart, or something less superficial?

The shadow of an intimation that something was wrong again came between Sally and the sun, but passed as swiftly as a wind-spiced cloud.

The valet led to a heavy, seven-seated touring-car, put their luggage in the rear, shut the door on the three, and swung up to the seat beside the chauffeur. The machine threaded a cautious way out of the rank, moved sedately up a somnolent street, turned a corner, and picked up its heels to the tune of a long, silken snore, flinging over its shoulder two miles of white, well metaled roadway with no appreciable effort whatever.

For a moment or two dwellings swept by like so many telegraph-poles past a car-window. Then they became more widely spaced, and were succeeded by a blurred and incoherent expanse of woods, fields, parks, hedges, glimpses of lawns surfaced like a billiard-table, flashes of white façades maculated with cool blue shadows.

Then, without warning, if without a jar, the car slowed down to a safe and sane pace and swung off between two cobblestone pillars into a well-kempt wilderness of trees that stood as a wall of privacy between the highroad and an exquisitely parked estate bordering the cliffs.

Debouching into the open, the drive swept a gracious curve round a wonderful wide lawn of living velvet and through the pillared *porte-cochère* of a long, low, white-walled building with many gaily awninged windows in its two wide-spread wings.

Sentinelled by somber cypresses, relieved against a sapphire sky bending to a sea of scarcely deeper shade, basking in soft, clear sunlight, the house seemed to hug the earth very intimately, to belong most indispensably, with an effect of permanence, of orderliness and dignity that brought to mind instinctively the term estate, and caused Sally to recall (with mispent charity) the fulsome frenzy of a sycophantic scribbler ranting of feudal aristocracies, representative houses, and encroaching tenantry.

The solitary symptom of a tenantry in

evidence here was a perfectly good American citizen in shirt-sleeves and overalls, pipe in mouth, toleration in his mien, calmly steering a wheelbarrow down the drive. Sally caught the glint of his cool eyes and experienced a flash of intuition into a soul steeped in contemplative indulgence of the city crowd and its silly antics. And forthwith, for some reason she found no time to analyze, she felt more at home, less apprehensive.

As the car pulled up beneath the *porte-cochère* a mild-eyed footman ran out to help the valet with the luggage; Savage skipped blithely down and gave a hand to his sister, offering like assistance to Sally in turn; and on the topmost of three broad, white, stone steps the *châtelaine* of Gosnold House appeared to welcome her guests—a vastly different personality, of course, from any of Sally's somewhat incoherent anticipations.

Going upon the rather sketchy suggestions of Mrs. Standish, the girl had prefigured Aunt Abby as a skittish female upward of threescore years and odd; a gabbling creature with a wealth of empty gesticulation and a parrot's vacant eye; semiirresponsible, prone to bright colors and an overyouthful style of dress.

She found, to the contrary, a lady of quiet reserve, composed of manner, authoritative of speech, not lacking in humor, of impeccable taste in dress, and to all appearances not a day older than forty-five, despite hair like snow that framed a face of rich but indisputably native complexion.

In her regard, when it was accorded exclusively to Sally, the girl divined a mildly diverted question, quite reasonable, as to her choice of traveling costume. Otherwise her reception was cordial, with reservations; nothing warranted the assumption that Mrs. Gosnold (Aunt Abby by her legitimate title) was not disposed to make up her mind about Miss Manwaring at her complete leisure. Interim she was very glad to see her; any friend of Adele's was always welcome to Gosnold House; and would Miss Manwaring be pleased to feel very much at home?

At this point Mrs. Standish affectionately linked arms with her relation and, with the nonchalant rudeness that was in those days almost a badge of caste, dragged her off to a cool and dusky corner of the paneled reception-hall to acquaint her with

the adulterated facts responsible for the phenomenon of Miss Manwaring.

"Be easy," Mr. Savage comforted the girl airily; "trust Adele to get away with it. That young woman is sure of a crown and harp in the hereafter if only because she'll make St. Peter himself believe black is white. You've got nothing to worry about. Now I'm off for a bath and nap; just time before luncheon. See you then. So-long."

He blew a most debonair kiss to his maternal aunt and trotted lightly up the broad staircase; and as Sally cast about for some place to wait inconspicuously on the pleasure of her betters Mrs. Gosnold called her.

"Oh, Miss Manwaring!"

The girl responded with an unaffected diffidence apparently pleasing in the eyes of her prospective employer.

"My niece has been telling me about you," she said with an engaging smile, "and I am already inclined to be grateful to her. It isn't often—truth to tell—she makes such prompt acknowledgment of my demands. And I'm a most disorderly person, so I miss very much the services of my former secretary. Do come nearer."

Sally drew within arm's length, and the elder woman put out a hand and caught the girl's in a firm, cool, friendly grasp.

"Your first name?" she inquired with a look of keen yet not unpleasant scrutiny.

"Sarah," said Sarah bluntly. "Man'aring" stuck in her guilty throat.

"S-a-r-a," Mrs. Standish punctiliously spelled it out.

"Thank you; I recognize it now!" A shrewd, sidelong glance flickered amusement at Mrs. Gosnold's niece. "You come from the middle West, I understand, and you've had rather a hard time of it in New York. What do you do best?"

"Why—I've tried to write," Sally confessed shyly.

"Oh! Novels?"

"Not quite so ambitious; short stories to begin with and then special articles for the newspapers—anything that promised to bring in a little money, but nothing ever did!"

"Then, I presume, you're familiar with typewriters?"

"Oh, yes."

"And can punctuate after a fashion?"

"I think so."

"You don't look it; far too womanly,

unless your appearance is deceptive, to know the true difference between a semi-colon and a hyphen. No matter; you have every qualification, it seems, including a good manner and a pleasant smile. You're engaged—on probation; I mean to say, for this one week we'll consider you simply my guest, but willing to help me out with my correspondence. Then, if you like the place and I like you as much as I hope I shall, you'll become my personal secretary at a salary of twenty-five dollars a week and all expenses. No—don't thank me; thank your sensible eyes!"

Mrs. Gosnold laughed lightly, gave Sally's hand a final but barely perceptible pressure, and released it.

"Now Thomas will show you your room. Mrs. Standish tells me she has promised to outfit you; her maid will bring you more suitable things by the time you've had your tub and some rest. Plenty of time; we lunch at one thirty."

The girl stammered some sort of an acknowledgment; she was never able to recall precisely what she said, in truth, but it served. And then she was amazedly ascending the broad staircase and following the flunky's back down a long, wide, drafty corridor to a room at one extreme of the building—a small room, daintily furnished and bright with summery cretonne, its individual bath adjoining.

"I'll be sending the maid to you at once, ma'am," said Thomas, and shut the door.

Sally wandered to a window, lifted the shade, and looked out with bewildered eyes.

From the front of the house to the edge of the cliff the grounds were as severely composed as an Italian formal garden; but to one side, screened by high box hedges, a tennis-court was in the active possession of four young people, none of them, apparently over twenty years of age. Their calls and laughter rang clear in the quietness, clear and vibrant with careless joy of living.

They did not in the least suggest the crew of adventurers which Mrs. Standish had led Sally to expect.

Thus far, indeed, Sally had failed to detect anything in the atmosphere of the establishment or in the bearing of its mistress to bear out the innuendo that Gosnold House was infested by a parasitic swarm and "Aunt Abby" the dupe of

her own unholy passions. Doubts hummed in Sally's head, and she was abruptly surprised to find the view obscured by a mist of her own making—by, in short, nothing less than tears.

The simple kindness of Mrs. Gosnold's welcome had touched the impostor more deeply than she had guessed. All this was offered her, this life of semi-idleness and luxury in this spot of poetic beauty, in return for nothing but trifling services. But she was not worthy!

A little gust of anger shook her—anger with her benefactors, that they could not have introduced her to this mundane paradise as her simple self, Miss Manvers—Sarah with the vulgar *h!*—by her own merits and defects to stand or fall.

But, as though the fates were weaving the fabric of her destiny less blindly than is their commonly reputed custom, the young woman's conscience during those few first hours had little time in which to work upon her better nature. Its first squeamish qualms, when it at length got Sally alone, were quickly counteracted by a knock at her door and what followed—the entrance of a quiet-mannered maid whose fresh-colored countenance loomed like some amiable, mature moon above a double armful of summery apparel.

"Mrs. Standish's compliments, ma'am, and I'm bringing your things. There's more to come—as much again I'm to fetch immediate—and the rest, Mrs. Standish says, there'll be time enough for after luncheon, when all her trunks is unpacked."

Carefully depositing her burden upon the bed, she beamed acknowledgment of Sally's breathless thanks and made off briskly, to return much too soon to suit one who would have been glad of longer grace in which to become more intimately acquainted with this new donation of her ravishing good fortune.

None the less, it didn't need another double armful of beautiful things to satisfy Sally that, whatever and how many might be the faults of her benefactress, niggardliness was not of their number.

"That's all for now, and Mrs. Standish's compliments, and will you be so kind as to stop and see her, when you're dressed, before going down to lunch. It's the last door on the left, just this side the stairs. Will I turn on your bath now?"

"Please don't trouble. I—"

"No trouble at all, ma'am. Indeed, and I'm sure you'll find us all very happy to do anything we can for you. It 'll be a nice change to be waiting on a pleasant-spoken person like yourself after that"—with a sniff—"Miss Matring."

"Oh!" Genuine disappointment was responsible for the exclamation. But a moment's thought persuaded Sally she had been unreasonable to hope her secret might be kept from the servants. Even if Mrs. Standish had not betrayed it to this maid, there had been that flunky, Thomas, in the reception-hall close at hand during the establishment of Sally's status, with his pose of inhuman detachment of interest—quite too perfect to be true.

"Beg pardon, ma'am?"

"Oh, nothing!" Sally swallowed her chagrin bravely. "I mean, thank you very much, but I'm accustomed to waiting on myself—except when it comes to hooks up the back—and you must have enough to keep you busy with so many people in the house."

"Not a great many just now, ma'am—not more'n a dozen, counting in Mrs. Standish and her brother and you. This has been an off week, so to speak, but they'll be arriving in plenty to-morrow and Saturday, I'm told."

That gossip was the woman's failing was a fact as obvious as that her desire was only to be friendly; brief reflection persuaded Sally that it was to her own interest neither to snub nor to neglect this gratuitous source of information. With some guilty conceit, befitting one indulging in almost Machiavellian subtlety, she let fall an extravagantly absent-minded "Yes?" and was rewarded, quite properly, with a garrulous history of her predecessor's career, from which she disengaged only two profitable impressions: that the staff of servants was devoted to their mistress, and that it would little advantage a secretary to quarrel with the one in the hope of ingratiating herself with the other.

So she contrived, as soon as might be without giving offense, to interrupt and dismiss the maid; then steeled her heart against the temptation to try on everything at once, and profited by long practise in the nice art of bathing, dressing, breakfasting, and trudging two miles in minimum time—between, that is, the explosion of a matutinal alarm and the last

moment when one might, without incurring a fine, register arrival on the clock at Huckster's entrance for employees. She hadn't the slightest notion what Mrs. Standish might want of her, but she was very sure that she didn't mean to invite displeasure by seeming careless of the lady's pleasure.

Consequently it was surprisingly soon that she stood, refreshed and comfortable in white linen, tapping at the door that Emmy, the maid, had designated.

Another maid, less prepossessing, admitted her to the dressing-room of the woman of fashion; and this last greeted Sally with a fretful, preoccupied frown, visible in the mirror, which reflected as well the excellent results obtainable from discreet employment of a high-keyed palette.

"Oh, it's you!" said Mrs. Standish shortly. "I was hoping you wouldn't be forever. Though you do look well in those duds. I've something quite important to say. You may go now, Ellen; I sha'n't want you again until evening."

With a scowl Ellen made off, an effort of masterly self-restraint alone enabling her to refrain from slamming the door.

"A most ridiculous thing has happened," Mrs. Standish pursued, delicately lining in her devastating eyebrows—"most annoying!" She jerked an impatient thumb at a telegram that lay open on the dressing-table. "Read that. It was waiting our arrival."

Sally obeyed with an opening wonder that swiftly gave place to panic consternation.

House entered by burglars last night discovered this morning forced entrance by scuttle extent of loss unknown but desk broken open safe cleaned out dining-room silver gone some clothing dresses missing one of gang evidently woman garments left in bath-room name indelible ink faded but apparently manners or manvers police notified detectives on case advise return please wire instructions—RIGGS.

"Now don't have hysterics!" Mrs. Standish snapped as Sally, with a low cry of dismay, sank stunned into a chair. "There's nothing for *you* to fret about—you're all right, here, with me, under my protection. Nobody's going to look for you here; but think how fortunate it was I had the wit to change your name! No; it's I who have to worry!"

"But I don't understand," the girl

stammered. "Of course there must be some mistake; you haven't really lost anything—"

"Oh, haven't I? I wish I could believe that. Don't you see what the telegram says—'safe cleaned out, dining-room silver gone'? That sounds suspiciously like a loss to me. Walter didn't 'clean out' the safe, and of course he didn't touch the silver. On the contrary, he's positive he shut the safe and fixed the combination before leaving. As for the dining-room, he didn't once set foot in it."

"Then—that burglar must have come back."

"That's our theory, naturally. Walter was so sure he'd scared the man off, he simply left the scuttle closed—"

"But he told me he found hammer and nails and fastened it up securely!"

"That was just his blague; he was having a good time, pretending to be what you took him for—an amateur cracksman; he made up that story to fool you. The truth is, he made an uncommonly asinine exhibition, even for Walter—so excited and upset by that fight with the real burglar, to say nothing of the mystery of your interference, that he didn't stop to make sure he had got hold of the right jewel-case. As a matter of fact, he hadn't; everything I own of any real value was left behind; what Walter brought me was an old case containing a lot of trinkets worth little or nothing aside from sentimental associations."

"Oh, I am *so* sorry!"

"I'm sure you are, but that doesn't mend matters. The only thing that will is for you to make good here and keep away from New York until the whole affair has blown over and, above all, never, under *any* consideration, breathe a word of the truth to a living soul."

"I'm hardly likely to do that, Mrs. Standish, it wouldn't—"

"But you might. I've got to warn you. Everything depends on secrecy. Suppose some one were to question you, and you thought you had to tell the truth—a detective, for instance. It's not unlikely that one may come down here to interview me. Walter is leaving for New York by the first boat—in hopes of preventing anything of the sort—but still it isn't impossible. And if it ever comes out that Walter was in the house last night after dark—well, you can see for yourself what chance we'll



have of making the burglar-insurance people pay us for what we've lost!"

## CHAPTER VII

### FRAUD

AT Gosnold House that day, in an airy dining-room from which sunlight was jealously excluded by Venetian blinds at every long, wide window, creating an oasis of cool twilight in the arid heart of day, ten persons sat at luncheon—a meal of few and simple courses, but admirably ordered and served upon a clothless expanse of dark mahogany, relieved at each place by little squares of lace and fine linen, and in the center by a great, brazen bowl of vivid roses.

In this strange atmosphere the outsider maintained a covertly watchful silence (which, if rarely interrupted, was altogether of her own election) and was happily guiltless of any positive fault; long proscription to the social hinterland of dingy boarding-houses, smug quick-lunch rooms, and casual studio feeding had not affected her nice feeling for the sensible thing at table. She possessed, furthermore, in full measure that amazing adaptability which seems to be innate with most American women of any walk in life; whatever she might lack to her detriment or embarrassment she was quick to mark, learn, assimilate, and make as much her own as if she had never been without it.

And then—for in spite of reassurances persistently iterated by Mrs. Standish, the news from New York troubled her profoundly—preoccupation largely counteracted self-consciousness through those first few dreaded moments of Sally's modest social debut.

The men on either side of her she found severally, if quite amiably, agreeable to indulge her reticence. Savage, for one, was secretly, she guessed, quite as much disconcerted by the reported *contretemps* in town; but he dissembled well, with a show of whimsical exasperation because of this emergency that tore him so soon away from both Gosnold House and his other neighbor at table, a Mrs. Artemas—a spirited, mercurial creature, not overhandsome of face, but wonderfully smart in dress and gesture, superbly stayed and well aware of it; a dark, fine woman who recognized the rivalry latent in Sally's dark

looks without dismay—as Sally conceded she might well.

On her other hand sat a handsome, well-bred boy of eighteen or so, one of the tennis four, answering to the name of Bob—evidently a cheerful soul, but at ease in the persuasion that comparative children should be seen and so forth. His partner of the courts sat next him—name, Babs—a frank-eyed, wholesome girl, perhaps a year his senior. Their surnames did not transpire, but they impressed Sally, and correctly, as unrelated save in community of unsentimental interests. The other players were not present.

Aside from these, the faces strange to her were those of a Miss Pride and Messrs. Lyttleton and Trego.

The last-named impressed her as a trifle ill at ease, possibly because of the blandishments of Mrs. Artemas, who had openly singled him out to be her special prey, and discovered an attitude of proprietorship to which he could not be said to respond with the ardor of a passionate, impulsive nature. A youngish man, with a heavy body, a bit ungainly in carriage, Mr. Trego had a square-jawed face with heavy-lidded, tranquil eyes. When circumstances demanded, he seemed capable of expressing himself simply and to the point, with a sure-footed, if crushing, wit. In white flannels his broad-shouldered bulk dwarfed the other men to insignificance.

Mr. Lyttleton—assigned to entertain his hostess, and (or Mrs. Gosnold flattered him) scoring heavily in that office—was as slenderly elegant and extreme a gallant as one may hope to encounter between magazine covers. He had an indisputable air, a way with him, the eye of a killer; if he perhaps fancied himself a trace too fervently, something subtle in his bearing toward Mrs. Standish fostered the suspicion that he was almost fearfully sensible of the charms of that lady.

Miss Pride, on Mrs. Gosnold's other hand, was a wiry, roan virgin who talked too much but seldom stupidly, exhibited a powerful virtuosity in strange gestures, and pointedly designated herself as a "spin" (diminutive for spinster) apparently deriving from this conceit an amusement esoteric to her audience. Similarly, she indulged a mettlesome fancy for referring to her hostess as "dear Abigail." Her own maiden name was eventually dis-



closed as Mercedes—pronounced, by request, Mar-say-daze.

From her alone Sally was conscious at the very outset of their acquaintance of a certain frigidity—as one may who approaches an open window in the winter unawares. And it was some time before she discovered that Miss Pride accounted her a rival, thanks to a cherished delusion, wholly of independent inspiration, that dear Abigail was a forlorn widow-woman in sore want of some thoroughly unselfish friend—somebody whose devotion could not possibly be thought mercenary—somebody very much like Mercedes Pride, spin.

The table talk was so much concerned with the sensation of the hour, the burglary, that Sally grew quickly indifferent to the topic, and thus was able to appreciate Savage's mental dexterity in discussing it with apparent candor, but without once verging upon any statement or admission that might count against the interests of his sister. He seemed wholly unconstrained, but the truth was not in him. Or, if it were, it was in on a life sentence.

The consensus pronounced Mrs. Standish a very fortunate woman to be so thoroughly protected by insurance, and this the lucky victim indorsed with outspoken complacency, even to the extent of a semiserious admission that she almost hoped the police would fail to recover the plunder. For while many items of the stolen property, of course, were priceless, things not to be duplicated, things (with a pensive sigh) inexpressibly endeared to one through associations, she couldn't deny (more brightly again) it would be rather a lark to get all that money and go shopping to replenish her treasure-chests from the stores of the most famous jewelers of the three capitals.

This aspect of the case made Mrs. Artemas frankly envious. "How perfectly ripping!" she declared. "I'm almost tempted to hire a burglar of my own!"

"And then," Lyttleton observed profoundly, "if one isn't in too great a hurry—there's no telling—one may run across the lost things in odd corners and buy them back for a song or so. Anne Warridge did, when they looted her Southampton place, some time ago. Remember the year 'motor-car pirates' terrorized Long Island? Well, long after everything was settled and the insurance people had paid up, Anne

unearthed several of her best pieces in the shops of bogus Parisian antiquaries, and bought them back at bargain rates."

"It sounds like a sin to me," Savage commented. "But I call you all to witness that, if anything like that happens in *this* family, I hereby declare in on the profits. It's worth all of that, this trip to town—and nobody sorry to see me go!"

After luncheon the party dispersed without formality. Mrs. Artemas vanished bodily, Mrs. Standish in the car with her brother to see him off; Bob and Babs murmured incoherently about a boat, and disappeared forthwith; and Lyttleton, pleading overdue correspondence, Trego was snapped up for auction bridge by Mrs. Gosnold and Miss Pride, Sally being elected to fourth place as one whose defective education must be promptly remedied, lest the roof fall in.

She found it very pleasant playing on a breeze-fanned veranda that overlooked the terrace and harbor and proved a tolerably apt pupil. A very little practise evoked helpful memories of whist-lore that she had thought completely atrophied by long disuse, and she was aided, besides, by a strong infusion in her mentality of that mysterious faculty we call card-sense. Before the end of the second rubber she was playing a game that won the outspoken approval of Trego and Mrs. Gosnold, and certainly compared well with Miss Pride's, in spite of the undying infatuation for auction professed by dear Abigail's one true friend.

It was noteworthy that dear Abigail seemed to have no interests of any character that were not passionately indorsed by her faithful Mercedes.

Pondering this matter, Sally found time to wonder that Mercedes had not been deemed a sufficiently vigilant protector for the poor rich widow; it was her notion that Mercedes missed few bets.

A circumstance which Sally herself had overlooked turned out to be the tacit understanding on which the game had been made up; and when, at the conclusion of the third rubber, Mr. Trego summed up the score, then calmly presented her with a twenty-dollar bill and some loose silver—Mercedes with stoic countenance performing the same painful operation on her own purse in favor of dear Abigail—the girl was overcome with consternation.

"But—no!" she protested, and blushed. "We weren't playing for money, surely!"

"Of course we were!" Miss Pride snapped, with the more spirit since Sally's stupidity supplied an unexpected outlet. "I never could see the amusement in playing cards without a trifling stake—though I always *do* say five cents a point is too much for a friendly game."

"It's our custom," Mrs. Gosnold smiled serenely. "You haven't conscientious scruples about playing for money, I hope?"

"Oh, no; but"—Sally couldn't, simply couldn't confess her penniless condition before Miss Pride and Mr. Trego—"but I didn't understand."

"That's all right," Trego insisted. "You won it fairly, and it wasn't all beginners' luck, either. It was good playing; some of your inferences were as sound as any I ever noticed."

"It really doesn't seem right," Sally demurred.

None the less she could not well refuse the money.

"I *must* have my revenge!" Miss Pride announced briskly, that expression being sanctioned by convention. "To-night, dear Abigail? Or would you like another rubber now?"

Mrs. Gosnold shook her head and laughed. "No, thank you; I've had enough for one afternoon, and I'm sleepy besides." She thrust back her chair and rose. "If you haven't tried the view from the terrace, Miss Manwaring, I'm sure you'll find it worth while. And let your ill-gotten gains rest lightly on your conscience; put them in the war-chest against the rainy day that's sure to come even to the best players. I myself play a rather conservative game, you'll find, but there are times when for days on end I can't seem to get a hand much better than a yarborough."

"Do you," Sally faltered, timidly appreciating the impertinence, "do you lose very much?"

"I? No fear!" Mrs. Gosnold laughed again. "It amuses me to keep a bridge account, and there's seldom a year when it fails to show a credit balance of at least a thousand."

If Sally's bewilderment was only the deeper for this information, she was sensible enough to hold her tongue.

Why need Mrs. Standish deliberately have uttered so monumental a falsehood about the losses of her aunt at cards? She might, of course, be simply and sincerely

mistaken, misled by over-solicitude for a well-beloved kinswoman.

On the other hand, the gesture of Adele Standish was not that of a woman easily deceived.

Thus the puzzle swung full circle.

"Mind if I show you the way, Miss Manwaring?"

"Oh, no!" Sally started from her abstraction to find Trego had lingered, and, smiling, turned to the steps that led down to the terrace. "I'll be very glad—"

But the truth was that she was not glad of this unsolicited company; she wanted uninterrupted opportunity to think things over; furthermore, she thought the sheer weight and masculine force of Trego's personality less ingratiating than another's—Savage's, for instance, however shallow, was always amusing—or Lyttleton's, with his flashing, insouciant smile, his easy grace and utter repose of manner.

But this Mr. Trego, swinging ponderously by her side down the terrace walks, maintaining what was doubtless intended as a civil silence, but what achieved only oppressiveness, of a sudden inspired a sharp impression that he would prove a man easy to dislike intensely—the sort of man who is capable of inspiring fear and makes enemies without any perceptible difficulty.

And if that were so—if, as it seemed, she had already, intuitively, acquired a distaste for Mr. Trego—how could she at once retain her self-respect and his money—money which she had won in defiance of the rules of fair play?

It stuck in her fist, a hard little wad of silver wrapped in the bill; nearly twenty-one dollars, the equivalent of three weeks' pay for drudgery, the winnings of an idle hour, the increment of false pretenses.

"There's your view," Trego's voice broke upon the reverie. "Pretty fine, isn't it?"

They paused in a corner of the terrace, where a low stone wall, gray, weathered, and lichened, fenced the brow of the cliff, and Sally's glance compassed a panorama of sea and sky and rocky headlands, with little appreciation of its wild, exquisite beauty.

She uttered an absent-minded "Yes," hesitated, plunged boldly: "Mr. Trego, I do wish you'd let me give back this money!"

His slowness in replying moved her to

seek an answer in his face. He was unquestionably sifting his surprise for some excuse for her extraordinary request; a deep gravity informed his heavy-lidded eyes that were keen with an intelligence far more alert than she had previously credited.

He said deliberately: "Why?"

"I'd rather not say." She offered the money in her open hand. "But I'd feel—well, easier, if you'd take it back."

He clasped his hands behind him and shook his head. "Not without good reason. I don't understand, and what I don't understand I can't be party to."

She tried the effect of a wistful smile. "Please! I wish you wouldn't make me tell you."

"I wish you wouldn't put me in such an uncomfortable position. I don't like to refuse you anything you've set your heart on, but my notion of playing the game is to lose like a loser and—win like a winner."

"That's just it. I can't win like a winner because—because I didn't win fairly."

"You never cheated."

It was less a question than an assertion.

"How do you know?"

"I'd have known quick enough if you'd tried. Anyway, you're not that kind."

"How do you know I'm not?"

There was a pause. Then Trego smiled oddly. "Better not ask me. You don't know me very well yet."

She colored faintly. "Then I must tell you you are wrong. I did cheat. I did, I tell you! I played for money without a cent to pay my losses if I lost. You don't call that fair play, do you?"

"Depends. Of course, it's hard to believe."

"I'm penniless. You don't understand my position here. I'm—nobody. Mrs. Standish took pity on me because I was out of work and brought me here to act as secretary to Mrs. Gosnold."

Trego nodded heavily. "I guessed it. I mean I felt pretty sure you were—well, of another world." He jerked a disrespectful head toward the smiling façade of Gosnold House. "The same as me," he added. "That's why I thought— But it doesn't matter what I thought."

An unreasonable resentment held her true to the course of her purpose.

"Well, now you know, you must see it's impossible—"

"I don't," he contended stubbornly. "Maybe I'm the devil's advocate, but the way I see it—to begin with, I was playing for money; if I had won I'd have expected you to pay up."

"But I couldn't—"

"You would have; that is, Mrs. Gosnold would have paid for you. It was up to her. She meant it that way. She was staking you against the Pride person and myself; that's why you played together; if you and she had lost, she'd have paid for both. So, you see, you may as well quit trying to make me touch that money."

His sophistry baffled her. She shook her head, confused and a little angry in defeat, liking him less than ever.

"Very well. But I don't feel right about it—and I think it most unkind of you."

"Sorry. I only want to play the game as it lies, and this is my idea of doing it."

There was a brief pause while Sally, at a loss, stared out over the shining harbor, now more than ever sensible of the profound, peaceful beauty of its azure floor over which bright sails swung and swayed like slim, tall ladies treading a measure of some stately dance.

"If you ask my definition of unfair play," Trego volunteered, "it's this present attitude of yours—forcing a quarrel on me and getting mad because I stick up for my conception of a square deal!"

"Oh, you misunderstand!" she protested. "I'm only distressed by my conception of what's wrong."

"It's the worst of gambling," he complained; "always winds up in some sort of a row."

"Why do you gamble, then?"

"Why not? We've got to do something here to keep from yawning in one another's faces."

"Is there so much of it going on all the time—gambling—here?"

"Oh, not a great deal. Not bad gambling, at least." He smiled faintly. "Not what I call gambling. But I was bred on strong meat—in mining camps—where my father made his money. There men gambled with their lives. Here—*hmp!*" He grunted amusedly. "It's just enough like the real thing to make a fellow restless. Sometimes I wish the old man hadn't struck it quite so rich. If he hadn't, we'd both be happier. As it is, *he* fluffs around, making a pest of himself in Wall Street

because he thinks it's the proper thing. And here am I, instead of earning dividends on what little knowledge I do happen to possess, sticking round with a set of idle egoists, simply because the old man's got his heart set on his son being in society! He won't be happy till he sees me married to one of these—er—women. Sometimes—"

Morosely he ruminated on the suppressed adjective for a moment. "Sometimes I feel it coming over me that the governor's liable to be happy, according to his lights, considerably quicker than I am."

## CHAPTER VIII

### A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

SHE sat beside the wide window of her bedchamber, on that third midnight at Gosnold House, in a state of lawless exaltation not less physical than spiritual and mental, a temper that proscribed sleep hopelessly.

The window was open, the night air still and suave and warm, her sole protection a filmy *négligée* over a night-dress of sheerest silk and lace. And in that hour Sarah Manvers was as nearly a beautiful woman as ever she was to be—her face faintly flushed in the stark moonlight faintly shadowed from within by the rich darkness of her blood, her dreaming eyes twin pools of limpid shadow, her dark lips shadowed by a little elusive smile.

She was relishing the sensation of life intensely, almost painfully; she was intensely alive for the first time in all her life, it seemed; in throat and wrists and temples pulses sang, now soft, now loud; and all her body glowed, from crown of head to tips of toes nestling in silken mules, with the warmth and the languor of life.

She was deeply and desperately in love.

The genius of her curious destiny, not content with making her free of all the good material things of life, had granted her as well this last and dearest boon. And though her years were twenty-seven, she had not loved before. She had dreamed of love, had been in love with love and with being loved, had believed she loved; but nothing in her experience compared with such rapture as to-night obsessed her being, wholly and without respite.

Life, indeed, grants no compensation for the ignominious necessity of love than this, that no other love was ever real but to-day's alone.

And so the beauty of that moonlight midnight seemed supernal. Becalmed, the island lay steeped in floods of ethereal silver, its sky an iridescent dome, its sea a shimmering shield of opalescence, its lawns and terraces argentine shadowed with deepest violet. There was never a definite sound, only the sibilance of a stillness made of many interwoven sounds, soft lisp of wavelets on the sands a hundred feet below, hum of nocturnal insect life in thickets and plantations, sobbing of a tiny, vagrant breeze lost and homeless in that vast serenity, wailing of a far violin, rumor of a distant motor-car. A night of potent witchery, a woman willingly bewitched.

In fancy she still could feel the pulsing of his heart against her bosom, the caressing touch of his hands, the warm flutter of his breath in her hair and upon her cheek, as in that last dance; and with an inexpressible hunger at once of flesh and soul she yearned to feel them all again, to be once more within the magic circle of his arms, to live once more in the light of his countenance.

It mattered nothing that she loved hopelessly a graceless runagate—and knew it well. She had not heeded the indirect warnings of Adele Standish and Mercedes Pride that the man was nothing better than an engaging scamp. Who was she to demand worthier object for her love? She was precisely nobody, and might waste her passion as she would, and none but herself the worse for it.

Nor did it matter that her love was desperate of return. She knew that he recognized and was a little amused and a little flattered by her unspoken admiration, but more deeply than that affected not at all. But that was his imperial prerogative; she did not mind; temporarily she believed herself quite content, and that she would continue so as long as permitted to hug to her secret heart the unutterable sweetness of being in love with him. Again, she was nobody, and didn't count, while he was precisely all that she had longed for ever since she was of an age to dream of love. He was not only of an admiring person, he wore the habit of distinction like a garment made for him alone. In



short, the man was irresistible, and the woman didn't even want to resist, but only despaired of opportunity ever to capitulate.

She was as love-sick as a schoolgirl of sixteen; a hundred times, if once, her barely parted lips breathed his name to the sympathetic night that never would betray her: "*Donald—Donald—Donald Lyttleton—*"

Now all the while she wasted sighing for him by the window Mr. Lyttleton spent idly speculating about her—lounging in a corner of the smoking-room, on the edge of a circle of other masculine guests making common excuse of alcohol to defer the tiresome formalities of going to bed and getting up again in the morning.

If this gentleman was Sally's junior in the matter of a year or two, he was overwhelmingly her senior in knowledge of his world—a world into which he had been brought neither to toil nor yet to spin, but simply to be the life and soul of the party. And at twenty-five he was beyond permitting sentiment to run away with judgment; he could resist temptation with as much fortitude as any man, always providing he could see any sound reason for resisting it—any reason, that is, promising a profit from the deed of abstinence.

Mr. Lyttleton had ten thousand a year of his own, income from a principal fortunately beyond his power to hypothecate; he spent twenty thousand with an easy conscience; he earnestly desired to be able to spend fifty without fear of consequences. Talents such as his merited maintenance—failing independent means, such maintenance as comes from marrying money and a wife above suspicion of parsimony. If only he had been able, or even had cared to behave himself, Mr. Lyttleton's fortunes might long since have been established on some such satisfactory basis. But he was sorely handicapped by the weakness of a sentimental nature; women would persist in falling in love with him—always, unhappily, women of moderate means. He couldn't help being sorry for them and seeking to assuage their sufferings; he couldn't forever be running away from some infatuate female, and so he was forever being found out and forgiven—by women. Most men, meanly envious, disliked him; all men held him in pardonable distrust. Devilish hard luck.

Take this Manwaring girl—pretty, intelligent, artless little woman, perhaps a bit mature, but fascinating all the same, affectingly naive about her trouble, which was simply spontaneous combustion, one more of those first-sight affairs. He had noticed the symptoms immediately, that night of her introduction to Gosnold House. He hadn't paid much attention to her during luncheon, and only sought her out—when they got up, on the spur of the moment, for that informal after-dinner dance by moonlight on the veranda—partly because he happened to notice her sitting to one side, so obviously longing for him to ask her, partly because it was his business to dance, and partly because—well, because it was less dangerous, everything considered, than dancing with Mrs. Standish.

And then the eloquent treachery of Sally's eyes and that little gesture of surrender with which she yielded herself to his guidance. It was really too bad, he thought, especially since she had made occasion to tell him frankly she hadn't a dollar to bless herself with. Still, he must give himself credit for behaving admirably; he hadn't encouraged the girl. Not much, at all events. Of course, it wasn't in human nature to ignore her entirely after that; moreover, to slight her would have been conspicuous, not to say uncivil. But one must draw the line somewhere.

To-night, for example, he had danced with her perhaps too often for her own good, to say nothing of his own. And they had sat out a dance or two—awfully old-fashioned custom; went out years ago—still, one did it, regardless, now and then.

Curious girl, the Manwaring; one moment almost melting into his arms, the next practically warning him against herself. And curiously reticent—said she was "nobody"—let it go at that. Very probably told the truth; she seemed to know nobody who was anybody, and though she was apparently very much at her ease most of the time, and not readily impressed, he noticed now and then a little tensivity in her manner, a covert watchfulness of other women, as though she were waiting for her cue.

At this juncture in his reverie Mr. Lyttleton peremptorily dismissed luckless Miss Manwaring from his mind, compounded his nightcap at the buffet, and joined in the general conversation.



Coincidentally the reverie of Miss Manwaring at her bedchamber window digressed to review fragmentarily the traffic and discoveries of three wonderful days.

Days in whose glamorous radiance the romance of *Cinderella* paled to the complexion of a sordidly realistic narrative of commonplaces; contemplating them, Sally, for the sake of her self-conceit, felt constrained to adopt an aloof, superior, skeptical pose. Conceding freely the incredible reality of this phase of her history, she none the less contended that no more true permanence inhered in it than in a dream.

She recapitulated many indisputable signs of the instability of her affairs. And of all those the foremost, the most glaring, was her personal success, at once actual and impossible. She saw herself (from that remote and weather-beaten coign of skepticism) moving freely to and fro in the great world of the socially elect, unhindered, unquestioned, tacitly accepted, meeting, chatting, treating, and parting with its denizens with a gesture of confidence that was never the gesture of S. Manvers of the hardware notions; a Nobody on terms of equality with indisputable Somebodies—vastly important Somebodies indeed, for the most part; so much so that by common consent mankind had created for them a special world within the world and set it apart for their exclusive shelter and delectation, for them to live in and have their being untroubled and uncontaminated by contact with the commonalty.

For all that, Sally couldn't see why they must be so cared for and catered to. The only thing that apparently distinguished them from those who lacked their advantages, who looked up reverently to them and read enviously of their doings in the papers, was their assurance, a quality ostensibly inimitable; yet she imitated it with seemingly flawless art. A contradiction that defied her wits to reconcile.

She wasted time in the endeavor; her own personality was prepossessing; she had sufficient tact never to seek to ingratiate herself; her solecisms were few and insignificant, and the introduction of Abigail Gosnold was an unimpeachable credential.

As for her antecedents, the lie which credited her to the city of Massillon passed unchallenged, while a conspiracy of silence kept private to the few acquainted with it

that hideous secret of her department-store servitude. Mrs. Gosnold would have said nothing out of sheer kindness of heart even if it had not been her settled habit to practise the difficult arts of minding her own business and keeping her own counsel. Savage was still in New York, but had he been at Gosnold House would have imitated the example set by his amiable sister and held his tongue even when most exasperated with Sally. Mr. Trego, of course, knew no more than what he had been free to surmise from the girl's impulsive confession that she had been out of both work and money when befriended by Mrs. Standish; but, whatever his inferences, he kept them to himself.

A simple, sincere, stubborn soul, this Mr. Trego; so, at least, he made himself appear to Sally, persistently seeking her and dumbly offering a friendship which she, in the preoccupation of her grand passion, had neither time nor wish to cultivate, and which he himself ingenuously apologized for on the plea of self-defense. He frankly professed a mortal dread of "these women," one of whom, he averred mysteriously, was bent on marrying him by main strength and good-will first time she caught him with lowered guard.

His misgivings were measurably corroborated by the attitude toward Sally adopted by Mrs. Standish in her capacity as close friend, foil, and confidant of Mrs. Artemas. In the course of those three days the girl had not been insensible to intimations of a strong, if as yet restrained, animus in the mind of the older woman. In alarm and regret she did her futile best to discourage this gentleman without being overtly discourteous. She could hardly do more; impossible to explain to her benefactress that he was not the man of her heart's choice.

Unfortunately, Trego was indifferent to tempered rebuffs.

"If you don't mind," he interrupted one of Sally's protracted snubs, "I'll just stick around and keep on enjoying the society of a human being. Of course, I know these others are all human in their way, but it isn't your way or mine. Perhaps it only seems so to me because I don't understand 'em. It's quite possible. One thing's *sure*, they don't understand me. At least, the women don't; I can get along with the men—most of 'em. They're not a bad lot, if immature. You can stand a lot of foolish-

ness from children once you realize their grown-uppishness is only make-believe.

"They don't know how to enjoy themselves," he expatiated; "they've got too much of everything, including spare time. What's a holiday to anybody who has never done a stroke of work? You and I know the difference; we can appreciate the fun of loafing between spells of work; but these people have got no standards to measure their fun by, so it's all the same to them—flat, vapid, monotonous, unless they season it up with cocktails and carrying on; and even that gets to have all the same flavor of tastelessness after a while. That's why so many of these women are going in for the suffragette business; it isn't that they care a whoop for the vote; it's because they want the excitement of wanting something they haven't got and can't get by signing a check for it."

"You're prejudiced," the girl objected. "You're at loose-ends yourself, idle and restless, and it distorts your mental vision. For my part, I've never met more charming people—"

"That's *your* stigmatism," he contended. "You've been wanting this society thing all your life, and now you've got it you're as pleased as a child with a new toy. Wait till the paint wears off and it won't shut its eyes when you put it down on its back and sawdust begins to leak out at the joints."

"Wouldn't it be more kind of you to leave me to discover the sawdust for myself?"

"It unquestionably would, and I ought to be kicked," Trego agreed heartily. "I only started this in fun, anyway, to make you see why it is you look so good to me—different—so sound and sane and wholesome that I just naturally can't help pestering you."

She did not know what to say to that. She suffered him.

Her duties as secretary to Mrs. Gosnold proved, when inaugurated the second morning after her arrival, to be at once light and interesting. Her employer was conservative enough in an unmannerly age to insist on answering all personal correspondence with her own hand; what passed between her and her few intimates was known to herself alone. But she carried on, in addition, an animated correspondence with numberless frauds—antique dealers, charities, professional poor

relations, social workers, and others of that ilk—which proved tremendously diverting to her amanuensis, especially when it transpired that Mrs. Gosnold had a mind and temper of her own, together with a vocabulary amply adequate to her powers of ironic observation. This last gift came out strongly in her diary, a daily record of her various interests and activities which she dictated, interspersing dry details with many an acid annotation.

When all was finished Sally found she had been busied for little more than two hours, and was given to understand that her duties would be made more burdensome only by the addition of a little light bookkeeping when she settled down to the routine of regular employment.

Of the alleged high play, at cards or otherwise, she had yet, at this third midnight, to see any real evidence. Mrs. Gosnold most undoubtedly played a stiff game of bridge, but she played it with a masterly facility, the outcome of long practise and profound study; her losses, when she lost, were minimized. Nor was there ever a sign of cheating that came under Sally's observation. Everybody played who didn't dance, and *vice versa*, but nobody seemed to play for the mere sake of winning money. And while the influx of week-end guests by the Friday evening boat brought the number at Gosnold House up to twenty-two, they were all apparently amiable, self-centered folk of long and intimate acquaintance with one another as well as with their hostess and all her neighbors on the island. Of that dubious crew of adventurers she had been led to expect there was never a hint.

Such provision as their hostess made for her guests' entertainment and amusement they patronized or ignored with equal nonchalance, according to individual whim; they commanded breakfasts for all hours of the morning, and they lunched at home and dined abroad, or reversed the order, or sought all their meals in the homes of neighboring friends, quite without notice or apology. Such was the modish manner with them that summer of 1914—a sedulous avoidance of anything resembling acknowledgment of obligation to those who entertained. Indeed, if one interpreted their attitude at its face value, the shoe was on the other foot.

And they brimmed the alleged hollowness of their days with an extraordinary

amount of running about. There was incessant shifting of interest from one focal point to another of the colony, a perpetually restless swarming hither and yon to some new center of distraction, a continual kaleidoscopic parade of the most wonderful and extravagant clothing the world has ever seen.

To the outsider, of course, all this was not merely entertaining and novel, if much as she had imagined it would be, it was more—it was fascination, it was enchantment, it was the joy-of living made manifest, it was life!

If only this bubble might not burst!

Of course, it must; even if not too good to be true, it was too wonderful to be enduring; the clock strikes twelve for every *Cinderella*, and few are blessed enough to be able to leave behind them a matchless slipper.

But whatever happened, nothing now could prevent her carrying to her grave the memory of this one glorious flight: "better to have loved and lost—"

The wraith of an old refrain troubled Sally's reverie. How did it go? "Now die the dream—"

Saturate with exquisite melancholy, she leaned out over the window-sill into the warm, still moonlight, drinking deep of the wine-scent of roses, dwelling upon the image of him whom she loved so madly.

What were the words again?

" . . . The past is not in vain,  
For wholly as it was your life,  
Can never be again, my dear,  
Can never be again."

She shook a mournful head, sadly envisaging the loveliness of the world through a mist of facile tears; that was too exquisitely, too poignantly true of her own plight; for, wholly as it was, her life could never be again.

And not for worlds would she have had it otherwise.

Below, in the deserted drawing-room, a time-mellowed clock chimed sonorously the hour of two.

Two o'clock of a Sunday morning, and all well; long since Gosnold House had lapsed into decent silence; an hour ago she had heard the last laggard footsteps, the last murmured good nights in the corridor outside her door as the men folk took themselves reluctantly off to their beds.

She leaned still farther out over the sill,

peering along the gleaming white façade; no window showed a light that she could see. She listened acutely; not a sound but the muttering of fretful little waves and the drowsy complaint of some bird troubled in its sleep.

Of all that heedless human company, it seemed, she alone remained awake.

Something in that circumstance proved almost resistlessly provocative to her innate lust for adventure. For upward of two hours she had been passive there in her chair, a prey to uneasy thoughts; now she was weary with much thinking, but as far as ever from the wish to sleep; never, indeed, more wide awake—possessed by a demon of restlessness, consumed with desire to rise up and go out into the scented moonstruck night and lose herself in its loneliness and—see what she should see.

Why not? No one need ever know. A staircase at her end of the corridor—little used except by servants—led to a small door opening directly upon the terrace. Providing it were not locked and the key removed, there was no earthly reason why, if so minded, she should not go quietly forth that way and drink her fill of the night's loveliness.

To a humor supple to such temptation the tang of lawlessness in a project innocent enough was irresistible. Besides, what was the harm? What could be the objection, even were the escapade to be discovered by misadventure?

Among other items in her collection of borrowed plumage she possessed an evening wrap, somewhat out of fashion, but eminently adapted to her purpose—long enough to cloak her figure to the ground, thus eliminating all necessity for dressing against chance encounter with some other uneasy soul. Worn with black stockings and slippers, it would render her almost invisible in shadow.

In another minute, without turning on a light, she had found and donned those several articles, and from her door was narrowly inspecting the hallway before venturing a step across the threshold.

It was quite empty and silent, its darkness moderated only by the single night-light burning at the head of the main staircase.

Satisfied, she closed the door and crept noiselessly down the steps, to find the side door not even locked.

Leaving it barely ajar, she stepped out

beneath the stars, hesitated for a moment of cautious reconnaissance, then darted across an open space of moonlight as swiftly as the shadow of a cloud wind-sped athwart the moon, and so gained the sheltering shadow of the high hedge between the formal garden and tennis-court.

The dew-drenched turf that bordered the paths muffled her footsteps as effectually as could be wished, and keeping circumspectly in shadow, the better to escape observation from any of the windows, she gained at length that corner of the terrace overlooking the water where she and Trego had paused for their first talk.

Nothing now prevented her from appreciating the view to the full. Enchanted, she withdrew a little way from the brow of the cliff to a seat on the stone wall, overshadowed by the hedge, and for a long time sat there motionless, content.

Below her the harbor lay steel-gray and still within its guardian headlands, a hundred slim, white pleasure craft riding its silent tide. Far out a Sound steamer crawled like some amphibious glowworm, its triple tier of deck-lights almost blended into one. Farther still the lights of the mainland glimmered low upon the horizon.

At a little distance and a point invisible an incautious footstep grated upon a gravel path of the terrace and was instantly hushed.

But the girl, stiffened to rigidity in her place, fancied she could hear the whisper of grass beneath stealthy feet.

Abruptly a man came out into broad moonlight and, pausing on a stone platform at the edge of the cliff by the head of the long, steep, wooden zigzag of stairs to the sands, looked back toward the house.

Sally held her breath. But her heart was like a mad thing—the man was Donald Lyttleton. He still wore evening dress, but had exchanged the formal coat for that hybrid garment which Sally had lately learned should *not* be termed a tuxedo. The brim of a soft, dark hat masked his eyes. He carried one shoulder stiffly, as if holding something in the hollow of his arm. She could not make out or imagine what this might be.

His hesitation was brief. Satisfied, he swung round to the stairway, in another instant had vanished. Only light footfalls on the wooden steps told of a steady descent, and at the same time furnished assurance that Sally had not victimized

herself with a waking vision bred of her infatuation.

The footfalls, not loud at best, had become inaudible before she found courage to approach the platform. With infinite pains to avoid a sound, she peered over the edge of its stone parapet.

For a little the gulf swam giddily beneath her who was never quite easy at any unusual height. But she set herself with determination to master this weakness and presently was able to examine the beach with a clear vision.

It was only partially shadowed by the cliffs, but that shadow was dense, and outside it nothing stirred. None the less, after a time she was able to discern Lyttleton's figure kneeling on the sands at the immediate foot of the cliff, a hundred feet or so to one side of the steps. And while she watched he rose, stood for a little staring out to sea, wasted a number of matches lighting a cigarette (which seemed curious, in view of the unbroken calm), and moved on out of sight beyond a shoulder of stone.

She waited fully ten minutes; but he did not reappear.

Then, retreating to her seat on the stone wall, she waited as long again—still no sign of Lyttleton.

But something else marked that second period of waiting that intrigued her no less than the mysterious actions of her beloved—this although she could imagine no link between the two.

Some freak of chance drew her attention to a small, dark shape, with one staring, red eye, that was stealing quietly across the Sound in the middle distance—of indefinite contour against the darkening waters, but undoubtedly a motor-boat, since there was no wind to drive any sailing vessel at its pace, or indeed at any pace at all.

While she watched it incuriously it came to a dead pause, and so remained for several minutes. Then, deliberately, with infinitely sardonic effect, it winked its single eye of red at her—winked portentously three times.

She made nothing of that, and in her profound ignorance of all things nautical might have considered it some curious bit of sea etiquette had she not, the next instant, caught out of the corner of her eye the sudden glow of a window lighted in the second story of Gosnold House.

As she turned in surprise the light went out. A pause of perhaps twenty seconds



ensued. Then the window shone out again—one in the left wing, the wing at the end of which her bedchamber was located. But when she essayed to reckon the rooms between it and her own it turned black again, and after another twenty seconds once more shone out and once more was darkened.

After this it continued stubbornly black, and by the time Sally gave up trying to determine precisely which window it had been, and turned her gaze seaward again, the boat had vanished. Its lights, at least, were no longer visible, and it was many minutes before the girl succeeded in locating the blur it made on the face of the waters. It seemed to be moving, but the distance was so great that she could not be sure which way.

A signal—yes, obviously; but between whom and for what purpose?

Who was on that boat? And who the tenant of that room of the flashing window? She was satisfied that the latter was one of a row of six windows to three rooms occupied by Mrs. Standish, Mrs. Artemas, and a pretty young widow who had arrived late Saturday afternoon and whose name Sally had yet to learn.

She pondered it all with ever-deepening perplexity until a change came over the night—a wind stirred, leaves rattled, boughs sighed plaintively, the waters wakened and filled the void of silence with soft clashing. Then, shivering, Sally rose and crept back toward the house.

But when she paused on the edge of the last shadow, preparatory to the dash across the moonlit space to the door, a step sounded beside her, a hand caught at her cloak.

She started back with a stifled cry.

"Steady!" Lyttleton's voice counseled her guardedly. "Don't make a row! Blessed if it ain't Miss Manwaring!"

## CHAPTER IX

### PICAROOON

PLUCKING peremptorily at her cloak, Lyttleton drew the girl to him and, seizing her hand, without further ceremony dragged her round the clump of shrubbery to a spot secure from observation.

She submitted without a hint of resistance. But she was trembling violently, and the contact with his hand was as fire to her blood.

Pausing, he stared and laughed uncertainly.

"Of all people!" he said in an undertone. "I never for an instant thought of you!"

Controlling her voice tolerably, she asked directly: "How did you get up again without my seeing you?"

"Simply enough—by the steps of the place next door. I saw you watching me—saw your head over the edge of the landing, black against the sky—and knew I'd never know who it was, unless by strategy. So I came up the other way and cut across to head you off."

He added, after a pause, with a semi-apologetic air: "What do you mean by it, anyway?"

"What—"

"Watching me this way—spying on me—"

"But I didn't mean to. I was as surprised to see you as you were, just now, to see me."

"Honestly?"

His eyes searched hers suspiciously. Flushing, she endeavored to assume some little dignity—drew up, lifted her chin, resumed possession of her hand.

"Of course," she said in an injured voice.

"Sure Mrs.—sure nobody sent you to spy on me?"

"Mr. Lyttleton!"

"I want to believe you."

"You've no right not to!"

"But what, will you tell me, are you doing out here this time of night?"

"I came out because I wanted to—I was restless, couldn't sleep."

He reflected upon this doubtfully.

"Funny freak," he remarked.

"You're impertinent!"

"I don't mean to be. Forgive me. I'm only puzzled—"

"So am I puzzled," she retorted with spirit. "Suppose *you* tell me what you're doing out here at this time of night—down on the beach—anxious to escape notice. If you ask me, I call *that* a funnier freak than mine!"

"Quite so," he agreed soberly; "and a very reasonable retort. Only I can't tell you. It's—er—a private matter."

"So I presumed—"

"Look here, Miss Manwaring; this is a serious business with me. Give me your word—"



"What makes that essential? Why do you think I'd lie—to you?"

It was just that little quaver prefacing her last two words which precipitated the affair. But for it a question natural enough under the circumstances would have proved innocuous. But for the life of her she could not control her voice; on those simple words it broke, and so the question became confession—confession, accusation, and challenge, all in one.

It created first a pause, an instant of breathless suspense, while Lyttleton stared in doubt and Sally steeled herself, with an effect of trembling, reluctant, upon the brink of some vast mystery.

Then: "To me," he said slowly. "You mean me to understand you might lie to another—but not to me?"

Her response was little better than a gasp. "You know it!"

He acknowledged this with half a nod; he knew it well, too well.

And she must have seemed very lovely to the man in that moment of defiance. She saw his eyes lighten with a singular flash, saw his face darken suddenly in the paling moonlight, and heard the sharp sibilance of his indrawn breath.

And whether or not it was so, she fancied the wind had fallen, that the night was hushed once more, and now more profoundly than it had ever been, as though the very world were standing still in anticipation.

She heard him cry, almost angrily: "Oh, damn it, I must not!"

And with that she was in his arms, sobbing, panting, going to heaven against his lips.

Then fell a lull. She was conscious that his embrace relaxed a trifle, heard the murmur of his consternation: "Oh, this is madness, madness!"

But when she tried to release herself his arms tightened.

"No!" he said thickly, "not now—not after this! Don't. I love you!"

She braced her hands against his breast, struggled, thrust him away from her, found herself free at last.

"You don't!" she sobbed miserably; "you don't love me. Don't lie to me! Let me go!"

"Why do you say that? You love me, and I—"

"Don't say it! It isn't true! I know. I threw myself at your head. What else

could you do? You care nothing about me; to you I'm just one more silly woman. No; let me be, please! You do *not* love me—you don't, you don't, you don't!"

He shrugged, relinquished his effort to recapture her, muttered uncertainly: "Blessed if I know—"

Recovering a little, she drew her hands swiftly across face and eyes that still burned with his kisses.

"Oh!" she cried brokenly, "why did you—why did I—"

"What's the good of asking that? It's done now!" he argued with a touch of aggrieved resentment. "I didn't mean—I meant to—I don't know what I meant! Only—never this."

He took an impatient stride or two in the shelter of the shadow, turned back to her, expostulant: "It's too bad! I'd have given worlds—"

"But now I've gone and done it!" she retorted bitterly. In chagrin, her own indignation mounted. "Is *is* too bad, *poor* Mr. Lyttleton!"

That was too much; he came closer and grasped her wrist. "Why do you talk that way to me?" he demanded wrathfully. "What have I done—"

"You? Nothing!" she broke in, roughly wrenching her hand free in a fury of humiliation. "Do you ever do anything? Isn't the woman always the aggressor? Never your fault—of course not! But don't, please, worry; I sha'n't ever remind you. You're quite free to go and forget what's happened as quickly as you like!"

She scrubbed the knuckles of one hand roughly across her quivering lips. "Forget!" she cried. "Oh, if only I might ever— But that's my penance, the mortification of remembering how I took advantage of the chivalry of a man who didn't care for me—and couldn't!"

"You don't know that," Lyttleton retorted. Provoked to imprudence by this sudden contrariety, this strange inconsistency, he made a futile attempt to regain her hand. "Don't be foolish. Can't you see I'm crazy about you?"

"Oh, yes!" she laughed, contemptuous.

"You're no fool," he declared hotly. "You know well you can't—a woman like you—play with a man like me as if he were a child. I tell you I—"

He checked himself with a firm hand; since, it seemed, she was one who took such matters seriously. "I'm mad about

you," he repeated in a more subdued tone, "and I'd give anything if— Only—the deuce of it is, I can't—"

"You can't afford to!" she snapped him up. "Oh, I understand you perfectly. Didn't I warn you I was penniless? You can't afford to love a penniless nobody, can you?—a shop-girl masquerading in borrowed finery! No—please don't look so incredulous; you must have guessed. Anyway, that's all I am, or was—a shop-girl out of work—before I was brought here to be Mrs. Gosnold's secretary. And that's all I'll be to-morrow, or as soon as ever she learns that I waylay her men guests at all hours and—steal their kisses!"

"She won't learn that from me," said Lyttleton, "not if you hold your tongue."

She drew back a pace, as though he had made to strike her, and for a moment was speechless, staring into the new countenance he showed her—the set, cold mask of the insolent, conquering male. And chagrin ate at her heart like an acid, so that inwardly she writhed with the pain of it.

"I—" she breathed, incredulously. "I hold *my* tongue! Oh! Do you think for an instant I'm anxious to advertise my ignominy?"

"It's a bargain, then?" he suggested coolly. "For my part, I don't mind admitting I'd much rather it didn't ever become known that I, too, was—let's say—troubled with insomnia to-night. But if you say nothing, and I say nothing—why, of course—there's not much I wouldn't do for you, my dear!"

After a little she said quietly: "Of course I deserved this. But I'm glad now it turned out the way it has. Two minutes ago I was wild with the shame of making myself so cheap as to let you—of being such a fool as to dream you could lower yourself to the level of a woman not what you'd call your social equal, who could so far forget her dignity as to let you see she cared for you. But, of course, since I am not that—your peer—but only a shop-girl, I'm glad it's happened. Because now I understand some things better—you, for example. I understand you very well now—too well!"

She laughed quietly to his dashed countenance. "Oh, I'm cured, no fear!" and turned as if to leave him.

He proved, however, unexpectedly loath to let her go.

Such spirit was not altogether new in his experience, but it wasn't every day one met a girl who had it; whatever her social status, here was rare fire—or the promise of it. Nor had he undervalued her; he had suspected as much from the very first; connoisseur that he was, his *flair* had not deceived him.

His lips tightened, his eyes glimmered ominously.

And she was, in a way, at his mercy. If what she said of herself were true, he need only speak a word and she would be as good as thrown out. Even Abigail Gosnold couldn't protect her, insist on people inviting a shop-girl to their houses. And if such drudgery were really what she had come up from, you might be sure she'd break her heart rather than forfeit all this that she had gained.

And then again she had been all for him from the very first. She had admitted as much out of her own mouth. Her own mouth, for that matter, had taken his kisses—and hungrily, or he was no judge of kissing. Only the surprise of it, his own dumb unreadiness, his unwonted lack of ingenuity and diplomatics had almost lost her to him. Not quite, however; it was not yet too late; and though the risk was great, the penalty heavy if he were discovered carrying on an affair under this roof, the game was well worth the candle.

Thus Mr. Lyttleton to his conscience; and thus it happened that, when she turned to go, he stepped quickly to her side and said quietly: "Oh, please, my dear—one minute."

The unexpected humility of his tone, mixed with the impudence of that term of endearment, so struck her that she hesitated despite the counsel of a sound intuition.

"We mustn't part this way—misunderstanding one another," he insisted, ignoring the hostility in her attitude and modulating his voice to a tone whose potency often had been proved. "Three words can set me right with you, if you'll only listen—"

She said frostily: "Well—"

"Three words." He drew still nearer. "I've said them once to-night. Will you hear them again? No—please listen! I meant what I said, but I was carried out of myself—clumsy—bungled my meaning. You misunderstood, misconstrued, and before I could correct you I'd lost my temper. You said cruel things—just enough,

no doubt, from your point of view—and you put words into my mouth, read thoughts into my mind that never were there. And I let you do me that injustice because I'm hot-tempered. And then, I'm not altogether a free agent; I'm not my own master, quite; and that's difficult to explain. If I could make you understand—"

Grown a little calmer, she couldn't deny there was something reasonable in his argument. She really had given him little chance; impulse and instinct had worked upon her, causing her to jump at conclusions which, however well-founded in fact, were without excuse in act. If he had kissed her, it wasn't without provocation, nor against her will; she had got no more than she asked for. The trouble was, she no longer wanted it. She had been the dupe of her own folly, blinded by her own romantic bent and the magnetism of the man to the essentially meretricious spirit clothed in the flesh of his engaging person.

It had been a simple and perhaps inevitable infatuation of a mind all too ready to be infatuated, needing heroic treatment—such as she'd had and blushed to remember—to cure. And the shock of waking from that mad dream, no less than the shock of physical contact, had made her frantic and unreasonable. She could but admit that and, admitting it, be generous enough to let him clear himself.

If only he would not insist on his declaration of love, that she knew to be untrue, as if the compliment of it must be a balm to a spirit as bruised as her own!

He went on: "And all this because I seemed to hesitate—because I did hesitate, knowing I couldn't say all I wanted to. And before I could explain—"

"You're not married?" she inquired with an absence of emotion that should have warned him.

"Of course not. But I'm dependent, and good for nothing in a business way. My income is from my family, and depends on their favor. What can I say? I love you—I do—on my soul, I do!"

He put his arms once more round her shoulders, and she did not resist him, but none the less held her head up and back, eying him steadily.

"I love you desperately, but I can't ask you to marry me until I get the permission of my family. Till then— Is there any reason— Be kind to me, be

sweet to me, O sweetest of women! I'm mad, mad about you!"

With no more warning he lowered his head, fastening his lips to the curve of her throat, and discovered suddenly and definitely his error. In a twinkling it was a savage animal he held in his arms, and before he knew what was happening she had broken his grasp and he was reeling back with a head that rang from the impact of an open hand upon his ear.

"You shrew!" he chattered. "You infernal little vixen! And I thought—"

He sprang toward her, beside himself with a purpose that failed only through the intervention of a third party.

A man swinging suddenly round the end of the hedge shouldered between Lyttleton and the object of his rage—a man whose bulk, in the loose flannels of a lounging suit, seemed double that of Lyttleton.

"Oh, here!" said Trego impatiently, but without raising his voice. "Come, come!" He caught Lyttleton's wrists and forced them down. "Don't be an idiot—as well as a cad. Do you want to rouse the household? If you do, and get kicked out, you'll never get another chance on this island, my friend!"

"Damn your impudence!" Lyttleton stuttered, sufficiently recalled to his senses to guard his tone, and wrenched at his wrists. "Let me go! I'll—"

"Sure I'll let you go," Trego agreed cheerfully. "But unless you want a thrashing in the presence of a lady, you'll do nothing foolish."

With this he released Mr. Lyttleton in such wise that he was an instant later picking himself up from the gravel path.

And while he was picking himself up he was also reflecting swiftly, this notwithstanding that Sally was no longer present, to be a stay upon their brawling.

If his look was vicious, his tone was subdued as he stood brushing off the dust of his downfall.

"Lucky you came when you did," he said, with an effort to seem composed. "I presume I ought to thank you for knocking me about. This confounded temper of mine will get me into serious trouble yet if I'm not careful. I was driven pretty nearly wild by that little devil—"

"Cut it right there!" Trego interrupted sharply. "I don't know anything about your row—didn't hear a word that passed between you two—and it's none of

my business. But if there's any blame to be borne, you'd better shoulder it yourself, for I warn you, I'm not going to hear any woman called names by a pup like you!"

## CHAPTER X

### LEGERDEMAIN

WITH a mind half distracted, the battlefield of a dozen unhappy emotions of which the most coherent were a seething self-reproach and frantic irritation with Trego (*why* must it have been he, of all men?) Sally inconsiderately left the two to conclude their quarrel without an audience—took to her heels incontinently and sped like a hunted shadow across the open lawn. She flung through the side door and left it wide, stumbled blindly up-stairs to her bedchamber door, and shut this last behind her with no anticipation so fond as that of solitude and freedom to cry her eyes out.

But she had no more than turned from the door toward her bed, in the same movement shrugging off her black cloak and letting it fall regardless to the floor, when she became aware that solitude was no more in that room, that she shared it with an alien Presence—a shape of misty pallor, filling the armchair, silhouetted vaguely against the moonlit rectangle of the window.

And she faltered and stopped stock-still, with a strangled whimper, due in part to sheer surprise, but mostly to semisuperstitious dread.

The Presence did not move; but she was frightfully aware of the fixed regard of its coldly hostile eyes.

"Who are you?" she demanded in a choking whisper. "What are you doing here? What do you want?"

"Where have you been?" the Presence retorted in a level voice instantly identified as that of Mrs. Standish. "What have you been doing?"—a spectral arm gestured vaguely toward the terrace—"out there?"

Sally took firm hold of herself and mustered all her wit against this emergency.

"I went out," she said slowly, "because I couldn't sleep, and—it seemed so lovely out there."

"Dressed like that!"

Profound scorn informed this comment. The girl writhed, but held herself well in hand.

"It was so late," she explained, "I

didn't think it possible there'd be anybody else about."

"Of course you didn't." The woman's tone was saturated with hateful innuendo. "On the other hand, you soon discovered your mistake, didn't you?"

Sally muttered a sullen "Yes—"

"You're wise not to lie to me," her patroness remarked with just a suspicion of satisfaction. "I knew, you see. I've been sitting here, waiting, the better part of an hour, listening to you two bickering behind the hedge. You little fool!"

Sally said nothing. Her mood was all obsessed now with the conviction that this was the end to her life of a moth. An end to everything; come morning and she must be cast forth in disgrace, to go back to—

She choked upon an importunate sob and dug nails into the palms of her hands.

"Who was the man?" Mrs. Standish pursued inexorably.

Then she didn't know!

"Does it matter?" Sally fenced.

"Certainly. I insist upon knowing. Remember your position here—and mine. I have assumed responsibility for you; but I cannot permit you to make me answerable for the antics of a man-crazy woman. If you can't behave yourself and refrain from annoying my aunt's guests, you must go. I thought you understood that!"

"Of course," the girl muttered. "You didn't think I expected anything else, did you?"

"Who was the man you followed out there?"

The calculated offensiveness of this was balanced by its sudden revelation to Sally's mind of the fact that Mrs. Standish didn't know there had been two men. It was, however, true that the window did not command a view of the approach to the side door.

"Are you going to tell me?"

"Please, Mrs. Standish, I'd rather not."

"Think again, my girl, and don't forget the circumstances under which I was persuaded, against my better judgment, to introduce you here."

"What do you mean?"

"Have you forgotten you were caught in the act of burglarizing my house?—that I first saw you wearing clothes stolen from me? You told a story, but how do I know it was true? You may well have been an accomplice of the ruffian who nearly killed my brother!"



"That's hardly likely, is it?"

"How am I to judge? You may have quarreled and turned on him in revenge. Judged by your conduct here, I'm sure you're capable of anything. Or you may have thought you saw a way to win greater profit by aiding my brother."

"That's all nonsense," Sally retorted hotly, "and you know it."

If dismissal from Gosnold House were inevitable, then there was no reason why she should not call her soul her own.

A pause was filled by the dramatic effect of Mrs. Standish nobly holding her temper in leash.

"When are you going to answer my question?"

Sally was dumb.

"Was it—that man you went out there to meet—"

"I didn't go to meet anybody. It was an accident."

"So *you* say. Was it some one of the guests here?"

Silence was all the answer.

"If you persist in your present attitude, remembering your dubious history, I have every right to take it for granted you went to meet an accomplice in crime—"

"Oh, rot!" Sally interjected impatiently.

And then, encouraged by consciousness of her audacity, she let her temper run away with her for an instant.

"All that's no good," she declared forcibly, "and you know it. If you mean to speak to Mrs. Gosnold about me in the morning, and have me sent away merely because I've had an unpleasant experience and refuse to discuss it with you—when it's none of your affair—why, I can't stop you. But I'm not a child, to be bullied and browbeaten, and I'm certainly not going to humor your curiosity about my private business. And that's flat. Now run and tell on me, if you really must—but you won't."

"Oh—indeed?" Mrs. Standish rose with vast dignity. "And why won't I, if you please?"

"Because you won't dare risk that insurance money, for one thing—"

"So you think you can blackmail—"

"Call it anything you like," Sally flashed defiantly. "Only bear in mind, I'm not going to submit tamely and be sent away in disgrace, like a kitchen-maid. I'll go, right enough—you don't need to worry about that—but I'll go on my own

excuse. If you tell on me, I'll tell on you, and I'll tell everything I know, too."

"And what, please," the woman purred dangerously, "do you think you know—"

"What about your signaling that yacht just now?"

It was shot at a venture; she had no real knowledge that the lighted window had been that of Mrs. Standish's bedroom; but it was just possible, and she chanced it, and it told, though she was not yet to know that with any certainty.

"What are you talking about?" Mrs. Standish hesitated with a hand on the door-knob.

"You know well enough. I saw what I saw. People don't do things like that unless there's something secret about it, something they don't want known."

"I think you must be out of your head," the woman responded with crushing hauteur. "I haven't the slightest notion what you mean, and you needn't trouble to enlighten me. I don't in the least care. But you may sleep on this—that your insolence shall be properly rewarded as soon as I can see my aunt in the morning. Good night."

With a defiant sniff that covered a spirit cringing in consternation, Sally turned her back and threw herself angrily into a chair. But the sound that she had expected of the door closing did not come, and after a minute she looked round to find Mrs. Standish still at pause upon the threshold.

"Oh," said Sally, with an impertinent assumption of remedying an oversight, "good night, I'm sure!"

Instead of audible reply, the woman shut the door and turned back to the middle of the room.

"I don't wish to be unjust," she said quietly. "I am quick-tempered, just as you are, but I always try to be fair in the end. Perhaps I was unpleasant and too exacting just now; but, you must admit, I really know little or nothing about you, and have every right to watch you closely."

She paused, as if expecting an answer, but before Sally could overcome her astonishment she resumed in the same level, reasonable tone:

"I was greatly distressed when I came here and found you had gone out at this hour of the night; certainly, you must allow, a queer proceeding on the part of a young woman in your position. And when you come back, after a long talk



with a strange man in the shelter of a hedge, and refuse to give an account of yourself, I confess you exasperated me. At the same time, accidents do happen; and it's true you have rights of privacy that even I must respect—to whom you owe a great deal, you must admit. And now I think I've gone as far toward making amends as even you could ask."

Astonishment and incredulity yielded to penitence. Sally sat up with a little gesture of contrition and appeal—an outflung hand instantly withdrawn; this was not a woman whose susceptibilities were to be touched by such means; even now, beneath her ostensible generosity, one divined a nature cold and little placable.

Then, with a remorseful cry, "Oh, I'm sorry!" the girl yielded to the tension of overwrought nerves and broke down completely, crushed, confounded, shaken by spasms of silent sobbing.

In the course of this she was conscious of the touch of a hand on her shoulder; no more than that. And when she had spent herself in tears and grew more calm, it was to find Mrs. Standish seated opposite her and waiting patiently, at all events with a fair imitation of that virtue.

"Please," Sally begged between gulps, "please forgive me. I'm so excited and unstrung—"

"I quite understand. There—compose yourself."

"If you still wish me to—if you insist—of course I'll tell you—"

"No." It cost the other woman an effort of renunciation, but she was steadfast to her secret purpose. "Forget that. It doesn't matter. I had no right to ask, and really do not care to know. But if you're quite able to pay attention, I'd like to consult with you—about what got me out of bed and brought me here this morning."

"I don't understand—"

"Of course you don't. But it has been on my nerves all evening, until I felt as if I must talk to somebody—and you are the only one I can trust."

Sally stared in a state of dumb bewilderment that eclipsed all she had experienced before. Truly the world was topsyturvy this madcap night! What under the moon now?

"You know how worried I've been about that affair in town. Men *are* so inconsiderate; simply because he knew how

things were going—and I presumed they must have been going well—Walter left me without a word till this evening. Then he telegraphed he'd be here to-morrow afternoon and that everything was all right; but that he is bringing with him one of the adjusters for the burglar-insurance people—a detective, I presume, the man is, really—and I'll have to answer some questions before we can collect the money to cover my loss."

"A detective!"

"Adjuster is a much more pleasant name. And I know it's merely a matter of formality, and I oughtn't to be silly about it, but I can't help it. I've been on edge ever since, fretting for fear something would come out about that case that Walter did bring me from the safe, you remember. If that were found—as it might be, if they ask me to produce what jewelry I have with me—well, I simply can't think what to do."

"Why not hide the case?"

"That's just it. But where? I can't imagine. Of course I can't very well smuggle it out of the house myself. So I thought perhaps you— At any rate, I've brought it to you."

"To me!"

"Don't be alarmed. Nobody will ever suspect you of any connection whatever with the affair. It'll be perfectly safe here, in your keeping, until you find a way to dispose of it. To-morrow night, for instance, as soon as it's dark, you might take it down to the shore, put a stone in it, and throw it out into the water. Or bury it in the sand. Anything. Nobody will pay any attention if you excuse yourself to go to your room or out to the terrace for half an hour. But I—well, you must see. I've hidden the case under your pillow. You may find some better place for it—but then you haven't a maid to hoodwink. I declare it has nearly driven me mad, these last few days, trying to keep the thing out of Ellen's sight. She's such a nosy, prying creature."

Mrs. Standish rose. "You will do this for me, won't you? I was sure I could depend on you. And—let us forget our little misunderstanding. I've forgotten it already."

She had left the room before Sally could formulate reasonable protest—reasonable, that is, remembering her burden of obligation to this woman.

It was an hour later before she at length settled upon satisfactory concealment for the incriminating jewel-case—in the recess behind one of her bureau-drawers, where it fitted precisely in the wrappings she did not trouble to remove.

In the gray crepuscle of the dawn at last, she flung herself upon the bed—and fell instantly asleep.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE THIRD DEGREE

In the sequel to that night of mischief and misadventure Sarah Manvers had sound reason to be thankful for the resilient youth which still animated her body. But of course she wasn't; youth will ever misprize till it must mourn its blessings.

Yet by virtue of that inestimable attribute alone was she able to do with only four hours' sleep (when Adele Standish, for example, needed eight, and then was seedy) and be the first of the household to appear for breakfast—clear of eye and fresh of color, with a countenance as serene as her temper and a temper as normal as her appetite.

As for this last, she made an excellent breakfast, alone in the sun-bright dining-room. And if at times, as she sat and munched, her look was pensive and remote, this was due less to misgivings than to mystification.

The quarrel and reconciliation with Mrs. Standish had cleared the atmosphere of their relations; henceforward there could be no more misunderstanding; they hated each other heartily; neither entertained any illusion as to that, but their interests were too far interdependent to license any play of private feeling. Sally wanted to stay on at Gosnold House, and Mrs. Standish was resigned; Mrs. Standish wanted her insurance money, and Sally would help her get it—by keeping quiet. Sally might be dealt with severely by the law if Mrs. Standish said the word, and Mrs. Standish, if Sally spoke, would suffer not only in her pocketbook, but in the graces of her aunt.

But Sally was not without compunction in respect to the deception practised on her still prospective employer. It wasn't possible to know Mrs. Gosnold and not like her; if that personality enforced respect, it was a lodestone for affection, and Sally

meant with all her heart to serve faithfully and well; if she was to have her way, neither would know a single regret because of their association until time and chance conspired to sunder it.

Then, too, sleep had appreciably changed the complexion of her mind toward the Lyttleton episode. She was not yet able to recall that chapter of infatuation without a cringe of shame; but that would pass with time, and the experience had not been without a value already apparent. For even as she had said to him, she was cured—and more than cured, she was instructed; she was not only better acquainted with herself, but had learned to read the Lyttleton temperament too well ever to require repetition of that lesson. If she had played the fatuous moth, she had come through cheaply, with wings not even singed, for what she had taken for flame had proved to be no more than cheapest incandescence. She felt so sure of all this that she could even contemplate the affair with some inklings of the amusement that it would yet afford her. And she was fixed to make this the key of her attitude toward the man in all such future intercourse as was unavoidable.

But Trego—

Trego was a horse of another color altogether. The very name of Trego was hateful in her hearing. There was little she would not willingly have done, however unjust and unfair, to avoid further communications with this animal of a Trego.

And yet, as she had learned, the term of his stay at Gosnold House had still another week to run, and he was in some way a favorite and intimate of Mrs. Gosnold, apt frequently to figure as her guest; and since this was so, and Sally herself bade fair (barring accidents) to prove a fixture in the household, it seemed inevitable that they must be often thrown together. So she must at all costs school herself to treat him civilly—at least without overt animosity.

She could imagine no task more difficult or distasteful; short of forfeiting her place in this new sphere, she would have paid almost any price for remission of that duty.

The irony of life seemed a bitter draft. Granting it had been requisite to some strange design of fate, in its inscrutable vagary, that several persons should suffer a night of broken rest at Gosnold House,

why must they have been those four and none other—Sally, Adele Standish, Lyttleton, Trego? Especially Trego! Why that one? Palpable bonds of mutual interest linked the three first named; their common affliction might conceivably have been ascribable to subtle psychological affinity. But Trego was well outside the triangle, even as perceptibly out of sympathy with a majority of Mrs. Gosnold's guests.

Mrs. Standish was studious in her avoidance of him without appearance of open slight. His nature and Lyttleton's were essentially antagonistic. Sally's animus had been well defined from the very beginning, when she had resented his being both physically and temperamentally so completely out of the picture of that existence to which she aspired.

But reconnaissance up that dark alley demonstrated it an indisputable *impasse* and Sally gave it up, reserving the grievance for tender nursing (she had a very human weakness for selected wrongs) and turned her attention to the puzzle involving Lyttleton's business on the beach at 2 A.M. and the signals exchanged by the yacht and the window.

Nor did she make much headway in this quarter. Instinct indicated a delicate harmony between those events and the formless shadow to which Sally had all along been sensitive, of something equivocal in the pretensions of Mrs. Standish. But that clue played will-o'-the-wisp with her fancy, leading it ever farther astray in a bottomless bog of black bewilderment.

None the less, she had just succeeded in establishing to her own satisfaction the probability that her sponsor had been, if not active in, at least acquainted with the business of the signals—reasoning shrewdly upon that lady's high-handed treatment of Sally's insinuation as inconsequential—when Mr. Trego elected to appear for breakfast.

That unhappy young man had been more wise if he had not taken it for granted that nine o'clock would be too early for Sally as well as for everybody else who didn't make breakfast in bed a habit, and a more diplomatic person would have been at pains to prepare himself against that inevitable *rencontre* with a young woman of exacerbated sensibilities. Nothing could have been more surely predestined to ghastly failure than his cheerful assump-

tion of a complete understanding, with the hint implicit that, having done Sally a signal service, he was willing to let bygones be bygones and take as tacit a sense of obligation not easy for her to express.

"Hel-lo!" he saluted the charming vision of her with undisguised pleasure and surprise. "You down already! Why, I made sure I had at least two hours' lead of the field."

"Yes," Sally agreed quietly; "I am early, I presume."

"Want to be careful," Trego cautioned; "it's hardly the thing, this early rising, you know; it's not really 'clawss'; it isn't done."

Sally said nothing. It was safer not to. And cheerfully unaware of her self-restraint, Trego armed himself with a plate and foraged at the side-table, with its array of silver-hooded hot-water dishes.

"Been for a swim," he volunteered with a thrill of coarse creature satisfaction in his tone. "Wonderful water along this coast—not too warm, like the Jersey beaches—to my taste, anyway, and not too all-fired cold, as it generally is north of the cape, but just right. Like bathing in champagne properly chilled. No such pick-me-up in the world as a dip in the cool of the morning. You should have tried it."

"I dare say," said Sally briefly, and was very glad she hadn't. "But that dreadfully long climb up from the beach—" she amended, feeling it obligatory upon her not to seem too short of civility.

"You don't mind that when you come to it after a swim," Trego declared. "It's only in anticipation, when you're snug between sheets and debating the rival claims of the distant beach and your handy bathtub; then, I grant you, the climb up the cliff weighs heavily in the scale of disadvantages."

He draw out the chair adjoining Sally's and attacked the half of an iced cantaloup, but after the first mouthful put down his spoon.

"Sugar, please," he said with a deprecatory grimace, indicating the bowl just beyond the girl's place. "I know I ought to go in for salt if I want to come through as a regular guy, but if you won't tell on me, I'm going to enjoy this melon in my own primitive Western way. Thanks."

He committed the unpardonable deed with a liberal hand. "Frightfully weird,

"you know," he mimicked with a chuckle, adding: "It takes the rude, untutored mind of a barbarian to be satisfied with sweetening a thing with sweetness instead of bitterness, doesn't it?"

"But I prefer salt myself," said the girl; "it brings out the flavor."

She concluded her defense in some confusion due to Trego's practically synchronous utterance of her identical phrase: "it brings out the flavor." Then she realized that he had deliberately trapped her and was meanly laughing in the triumph of his low cunning. And she had to laugh, too, to save her face; but it was an empty laugh and accompanied by a flush that might have warned the man had he not too soon returned attention to his melon.

"Never fails," he remarked. "Though, of course, it isn't safe to work it on anybody in this outfit—not, at least, unless you're pretty sure there's a trace of human humor in the make-up of the specimen. I'm making a collection of those stereotypes; it helps a lot. O table-talk! where is thy sting—when a fellow knows all the answers?"

He rose, set aside the shell of the maltreated melon, and returned with his plunder from the hot-water dishes, to find Sally on the point of leaving.

"Not going?" he protested more soberly. "Don't tell me I offended you, catching you up like that!"

"How absurd!" the infuriated girl replied, smiling falsely. "But—"

"Then, if you've nothing pressing on, keep me company for a little. I want to ask your advice. I'm puzzled. Maybe you can suggest something."

She couldn't well go, then, without betraying umbrage, so she settled herself with a resigned temper, and for want of a better lead contented herself with a conversational stop-gap—"Puzzled?"—spoken in an encouraging tone.

"Yes. Something I noticed this morning. But it weaves into last night—maybe. Maybe not. I'm a slow thinker when it comes to puzzles."

He filled a cup with coffee from the shining urn and resumed his chair.

"You see—" Some intimation of his gaucherie made him stumble. "Of course," he went on, semiapologetic, "you understand that I'm going on the assumption that you're as human as I am."

"Thank you," said Sally sweetly.

"Human enough," he explained, "not to think I'm a savage because I've reminded you of last night."

"I see no reason—" she began with dignity.

"And there isn't any," he argued heartily. "We're both old enough to behave like grown-ups. Only, a fellow never can tell where he stands with most of these festive dames. I've been lorgnetted until I'm scared to open my mouth. But with you—well, it's like meeting somebody from home to talk to you."

"But the puzzle—" she reminded him with more patience than he knew.

"Oh, yes. I was going to say when I side-tracked myself: what got me up was Lyttleton. He has the room next mine, you know. I'd just turned out my bedside light—been reading, you understand—when I heard his door open very gently and somebody go pussy-footing down the hall. And for some reason that kept me awake—because it was none of my business, I guess—waiting for him to come back and wondering what in thunder took him out on the prowl like that. And when I had wondered myself wide awake I got up and dressed—thought I'd take a walk, too, since the night was so fine. I honestly had no idea of following him—that was all an accident, my butting in the way I did."

Sudden perception of a footing upon ground properly taboo even to angels caused the man to flush brick-red. His eyes sought Sally's in honest consternation.

"Hope you don't mind," he mumbled.

"Please go on," she said, conscious of the heat in her own cheeks, and holding him in an esteem proportionately more poisonous.

"Well. About this morning: As I say, I went down to the beach for a dip. You know how that beach is—about a twelve-foot breadth of sand from the bottom of the cliff when the tide's high, with about twenty feet more when it's low. So footprints show until the weather rubs them out—takes a tolerable storm, as a rule. Below high-water mark it's different; the sand is covered up and smoothed out twice a day. Well, then, just below high-water mark—that is, about five feet below it, or at quarter-tide mark—I noticed the print of a rowboat's bows on the sand. It had landed there and waited a while—drawn



up only part way out of the water—about three o'clock this morning. Two men had got out; one waited with the boat, the other went up toward the foot of the steps and mixed his footprints up with all the others. I don't know what for and can't imagine; but that's what happened, and presently he turned round and went back to the boat, and the two of them shoved her off again—trusting, I guess, to the tide to cover up the signs of their landing.

"Why they should want to be secret about it, God only knows; but if they didn't, *why* three o'clock? It's all private beach along here, and whereas I believe there are no property rights below high-water mark, and anybody has a right to land anywhere in an emergency—where was the emergency? There was no gale last night, and if there had been, you'd think distressed mariners would have sense enough to come ashore farther along, toward the village, where they could find shelter—and all that. The more I think about it, the funnier it looks to me."

He finished his breakfast and his statement at the same time, pushed back his chair, and produced a cigarette-case.

"You don't mind? Thanks. Now what do you think?"

Sally shook her head and looked blank. "Three o'clock; how can you be so positive about that?" she inquired obliquely.

"Because it's high tide twice a day—approximately every twelve hours. I looked up a tide-table in the hall out there and found it was high at one eleven this morning and low at seven thirty-five—just about an hour turned when I had my swim, the water-line then about twelve feet short of the marks of the boat. It'll be high again about one forty-eight this afternoon—at least noon before water begins to wash over those marks."

He puffed voluminously. "If there was any shenanigan afoot last night, a couple of thick-heads footed it—that is, if they cared whether they left any clues or not."

Constrained to fill in his expectant pause, she made shift with a "How very odd!" that was a triumph of naturalness.

"Isn't it?" he agreed. "Now what do you make of it?"

"Nothing," she replied truthfully, for she was entirely at a loss to fit this new development into the adventures of Lyttleton and the lighted window—and make sense of it. "I can't imagine—"

"What I want to know is this," Trego propounded cunningly: "had Lyttleton anything to do with it?"

She had prepared for that question, had settled her answer beforehand; even with any real reason to suspect Lyttleton of complicity in something underhand, she would not have betrayed him to this man—if to anybody.

"I'm sure I can't say."

"Well—it's funny, anyhow. Guess we better not say anything about it. After all, it's no concern of ours."

She couldn't refrain from the question: "But why should you think he—"

"Well, what *was* he doing all that time—"

He checked and stammered with embarrassment. "I beg your pardon!"

"You needn't. He wasn't—with me—all that time."

The situation grown intolerable, Sally got up suddenly and without a word of excuse, took her scarlet cheeks out of the dining-room and back to her bedchamber.

On the dot of their standing appointment she found Mrs. Gosnold unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less strikingly posed, in the golden glow of her boudoir window, for the portrait of a lady of quality on fatigue duty—very much at her ease in a lavender-silk morning gown and stretched out in a *chaise longue*, a tray with fruit, coffee, and rolls on her left dividing attention with a sheaf of morning notes on the other side and the portable writing-case on her knees.

Acknowledging Sally's appearance with a pleasant, if slightly abstracted, smile, she murmured: "Oh, is it you, Miss Manwaring? Sit down, please. Half a minute—"

On the *qui vive* for any indication that Mrs. Standish had been false to her word or Mrs. Gosnold informed through any other channel of the secret history of that night, and consequently inclined to hold her secretary in distrust, Sally detected nothing in the other's manner to add to her uneasiness. To the contrary, in fact. She sat and watched in admiration, and thought that she had never known a woman better poised, more serenely mistress of herself and of the technique of life. If Mrs. Gosnold nursed a secret sorrow, anxiety, or grievance, the world would never learn of it through any flaw in the armor of her self-possession.



She wrought busily with a fountain pen for little longer than the stipulated period of delay, then addressed and sealed a note and looked up again with her amiable, shrewd smile.

"Good morning!" she laughed, quite as if she had not till then recognized Sally's presence. "You've slept well, I trust?"

Sally did not hesitate perceptibly; the honest impulse prevailed. Secretly she was determined to tell no more major lies, though the heavens fell—only such minor fibs as are necessary to lubricate the machinery of society. She would do her best, of course, to preserve the hateful truth that had been so cunningly covered up by the lies of Mrs. Standish's first invention; but she would do that best, if possible, more by keeping silence than by coining and uttering fresh falsehoods.

"Not so well last night," she confessed. "I don't know what was the matter with me, but somehow I didn't seem even to want to sleep."

"I know," Mrs. Gosnold nodded wisely. "I'm not yet old enough to have forgotten these midsummer moonlight nights of ours. When I was a girl and being courted, from this very house, I know, I used to wait until everybody had gone to bed and creep out and wander for hours—"

Her pause invited confidences. And momentarily Sally's heart thumped like a trip-hammer. Did she, then, either know or guess?

"I did that last night," she responded, "but I hadn't your excuse."

"You mean, you're not being courted? Don't be impatient. Once to every woman—too often to most. And it's as well to take one's time these days. Perhaps it's a sign of age, and I shouldn't own it, but it does seem to me that the young men of to-day are an uncommonly godless crew. I should be sorry to have you make a mistake—"

She contented herself with that much warning and no more; but Sally knew their thoughts were one, focused upon a singular though by no means strange example of the young men of the present day.

"I think," her employer pursued, with a look excusing the transient keenness of her scrutiny, "our island air agrees with you. If you have had one poor night, all the same you're quite another girl than the one who came here. Was it only four days ago? I hope you're quite comfortable?"

"Oh, yes, indeed—"

"And would you care to stay on?"

"With all my heart!"

"I see no reason why you shouldn't. I like you very well; you're quick and willing—and you humor my weakness for the respect of my associates. I don't ask for their dependence. If you like, we'll say your engagement begins to-day, the first of the week."

"You are very kind."

"I'm very selfish. I like intelligence, prettiness, and youth—must have them at any cost! So that's understood. Of course, there are certain questions to be settled, arrangements to be made. For example, I assume responsibility for your losses at bridge, because playing when I wish you to is one of your duties. But these matters adjust themselves as they come up from time to time."

"Thank you," said Sally in a tone that, though little more than a whisper, was more eloquent of her gratitude than the mere phrase could possibly have been.

"So now I shall stop calling you Miss Manwaring."

"Please do—"

"It's much too formal, considering I'm old enough to be your mother—"

"Oh, no!" Sally protested involuntarily.

"That isn't possible."

"I'll not see fifty-five again," Mrs. Gosnold announced. "But that's a boudoir secret—"

"I'll never—"

"And a secret of *Polichinelle* besides," the other laughed; "everybody I know or care a snap for knows it. At the same time, no woman cares to have her age discussed, even if it is public property and she quite old enough to be beyond such vanity. No matter; I'm going to call you Sara, if you've no objection."

"Why not Sally?" the girl suggested tentatively. "That's my name—I mean, what I'm accustomed to."

"Thank you; I like it even better," Mrs. Gosnold affirmed. "I'm conservative enough to favor old-time names. My own, for instance, Abigail, pleases me immensely, though I seldom meet a young woman nowadays who can hear it without looking either incredulous or as though she doubted the sanity of my sponsors in baptism."

She stayed the obvious reply with an indulgent toss of a hand still fair.

"Now to business. I've mapped out a busy morning for you. To begin with, here are a dozen or so notes to deliver. You may take the dog-cart—no, to save time, one of the motors. We must give these good people as much time as possible, considering it's a spur-of-the-moment affair. That is why, you understand, there are so few invitations—because I'd no time to write and post a number. But each of these is a bid to some friend with a houseful of people to come and bring all her guests.

"Oh!" she laughed, catching the look of puzzlement on the girl's face, "I haven't told you what it is. Well, my dear, it's an old woman's whim. Every so often I break loose this way and keep my memory green, as one who, in her day, never entertained but in some unique fashion. I was once famous for that sort of thing, but of late years I haven't exerted myself except when bored to extinction by the deadly commonplace of the amusements most people offer us.

"For some time I've had this in mind, and everything prepared; you may, if you like, call it a spontaneous masquerade by moonlight. Half the fun of such affairs comes of the last-moment, makeshift costumes; if you give people much time to think them up it is always a stiff and frigid function. Moreover, it demands a perfect night—and we can't count on our island weather twenty-four hours in advance. But to-day is perfect, and to-night will be fair with the moon at its full. You may dance on the veranda or make love on the terrace, just as you please, from ten o'clock till three—or later. Supper will be served from midnight on. At one we shall unmask.

"As I say, all preparations had been made, weather permitting; I had merely to telephone the caterers, electricians, and musicians, and scribble these invitations. I'd advise you to arrange your day to include a good long nap before dinner, for you'll be up till 'all hours very likely. I fancy I can promise you some fun."

Mrs. Gosnold ceased upon a note of mischievous enjoyment in anticipation that would have suited a girl of sixteen, then analyzed the trouble behind Sally's perturbed countenance.

"As for your costume, you're not to give it a thought. I have arranged for it to be brought to your room at half past

nine, and I pledge you my word you'll find it becoming. I have only two requests to make of you: that you refrain from unmasking or admitting your identity until one o'clock, and that if you recognize me, you hold your tongue. Is it a bargain?"

"You're so good to me," said Sally simply, "I can't think how to thank you."

"Leave that, too, to me. It's quite possible I may suggest a way." Mrs. Gosnold smiled curiously, as at a thought reserved. "Now run along—order the car and put on your prettiest hat. But a moment!"

She illustrated the process of taking thought by puckering her brows and clipping her chin between a thumb and forefinger.

"Let me see. Have I remembered everybody?" She conned, half aloud, a list of names. "But no! What an oversight! I should never have forgiven myself—or have been forgiven. And my fountain pen needs refilling. No"—as Sally offered to take the pen—"sit there at the desk and write at my dictation. I will sign it."

Obediently Sally took her place at the escritoire, arranged a sheet of the monogrammed note-paper used by Mrs. Gosnold for correspondence with personal friends (as distinguished from the formal letter-head of Gosnold House, with its bristling array of telephone numbers and telegraph, post-office, railroad, and steamboat addresses), dipped a pen, and waited with a mind preoccupied by visions of the night to come. Her first ball! The first real function of Society!

"My dear friend," Mrs. Gosnold enunciated deliberately in a colorless, placid voice. "(Colon, dash, paragraph) It was only late last night, and then by merest chance, I learned you had come to the island yesterday instead of sailing last week, in accordance with your announced intention (period). So I cannot decently begin by berating you (dash) as I should, had you been here twenty-four hours without personally letting me know (period)."

A pause. Sally dreamed a beautiful dream of a crinoline costume, beflowered and beflounced, such as *Vogue* had lately pictured as a forecast of autumn fashions, an iridescent bubble of a dream shattered by the query: "Where was I, please?"

"Letting me know," she quoted absently.

"Oh, yes. (Paragraph.) I hope with all my heart your change of plans was not brought about by any untoward accident (semicolon); but Italy's loss is the island's gain (semicolon); and I am looking forward with the keenest pleasure to seeing you again (period, paragraph). May I hope that it will be not later than to-night (point of interrogation)? I have arranged an impromptu masquerade by moonlight on the terrace (period). It should be a pretty sight (period). From ten o'clock till any time you like—(dash)—masks until one (period). Do come and help make the evening a happy one for me (period)."

Another contemplative pause. But this time Sally did not dream. She sat quite still in speculative wonder, troubled with a vague alarm as disturbing as the sound of distant thunder in the evening, of an August day.

"Cue, please?"

The girl replied in a low tone: "'Evening a happy one'—"

"Yes. Add: Affectionately yours—Or wait! Have you written—"

"'Affectionately yours'—yes."

"No matter; leave a space for my signature, and add this: P. S. You will be glad to see, no doubt, that your letter to Adele has borne fruit (period). Miss Manwaring does splendidly as an amanuensis (period). Your judgment was always trustworthy (period). And address the envelope, of course, to Mrs. Cornwallis English. She is stopping, I hear, with the Lorimers, at Bleak House—the gray stone house on the hill at the end of West Harbor Drive."

After a time Mrs. Gosnold said almost sharply: "Well, Miss Manwaring! You have little time to waste. Bring me the note, please, and a pen."

With a gesture of despair the girl twisted in her chair and showed the woman a stricken face.

"Are you sure—" she stammered.

"Yes?" Mrs. Gosnold prompted with an accent of surprise. "What is it, Sally?"

The girl gulped hard, and mechanically put a hand to her throat, rising as she spoke.

"Are you sure Mrs. English is on the island?"

"What of it? Why, I presumed you would be glad of the opportunity to thank her for that letter of—"

"There was no letter!"

"I beg pardon?" Mrs. Gosnold opened wide her eyes.

"I say," Sally faltered, yet with determination, "there was no letter. Mrs. Standish—that is—we both lied to you. I don't know Mrs. English; I never spoke a word to her in all my life. I didn't take any letter to Mrs. Standish. That was a story manufactured out of whole cloth to account for me—get me this position here."

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Gosnold assented coolly. "I felt quite sure of that in the beginning. You never could believe a word Adele said from the time she was able to talk. Even if the truth would have served as well and with less trouble, she was sure to disfigure it beyond identification. And Walter's just as bad. But you, my dear, will never make a good liar; the first words we spoke together I saw your eyes wince, and knew you were tormented by something on your conscience. Moreover, the last person Edna English would send any one with a letter of recommendation to is my niece, who has not yet been proved guilty of one unselfish act. So I thought I'd test the story. Now you may tear up that note—Mrs. English is in Italy this very day, to the best of my belief—and tell me what it's all about."

## CHAPTER XII

MME. MACHIAVELLI

WITHIN the span of an exceedingly bad quarter of an hour for Sally the cat was completely out of the bag, the fat as irretrievably in the fire; Sally was out of breath and in tears of penitence and despair; Mrs. Gosnold was out of her chair, thoughtfully pacing to and fro, and in full possession of all facts materially bearing upon the translation of S. Manvers of the hardware notions into S. Manwaring of the Golden Destiny.

No vital detail had escaped her penetrating probe; she proved herself past mistress in the art of cross-examination, and found in Sally a willing witness.

For the latter, however, it had seemed less giving of testimony than a hysteric confessional. She had wrung her conscience dry, deriving from the act a sort of awful joy mitigated by the one regret: that she had not more to confess, that the mystery of her favoring must remain a

mystery which, with all the good-will in the world, no word of hers could elucidate.

As for the secret history of last night's dark transactions, however, that was not altogether hers to disclose. The interests and affairs of others were involved, she dared not guess how disastrously; she was only sensitive to the feeling that something black and foul and hideous skulked behind that shut door. Heaven forbid that hers should be the hand to open it and let ruin loose upon this pleasant world of Gosnold House!

It seemed incumbent upon her to explain that Mrs. Standish had brought to her room a jewel-case for Sally to hide or otherwise dispose of. Beyond this she feared to go. She would not mention Lyttleton or Trego or the yacht, or the window of the signals.

In the end, stopping tears and sobs as best she might, she waited listlessly her sentence of expulsion. Now nothing mattered; if her heart was lighter, her future was darker; and presently the nobody that she was would return into that drab nowhere whence some ill wind of chance had wafted her.

"Don't be a fool!" Mrs. Gosnold counseled her abruptly with unwonted brusqueness. "Do you really think I'm capable of baiting a trap for you with fair words and flattery for the sheer, inhuman pleasure of seeing you suffer until I choose to set you adrift? See how you've upset me already; metaphor is never safe in a woman's hands, but I'm seldom as bad as all that!"

Sally sniffled abjectly. "I'm willing to do anything—"

"You've done enough. Be content. If it were not for you and what you've been able to tell me, I'd— Well, no matter; I don't know what I'd do. As it is— Look here!"

She paused in front of Sally, dropped one hand kindly on the girl's shoulder, with the other lifted her chin, exploring her tear-wet eyes with a gaze at once charitable and discriminating.

"I've taken a fancy to you, if you are a bit of an idiot. And I believe implicitly every word you've uttered. Perhaps I oughtn't to, and I probably wouldn't, if your account of yourself didn't chime so exactly with what I know about my dutiful niece and nephew. But, you see, I *do* know them, and very well—and that

they're quite capable of all you say, and more to boot. Adele Standish in especial I know far too well to believe for an instant she'd burden herself with benevolent intentions toward another woman without expecting to reap some wildly inadequate reward. That's all that bothers me. I can't understand what they wanted with you. But I'm not going to let my mystification lose me the services of a promising amanuensis—not in these days, when intelligence is scarce and far to seek."

"Do you mean I'm to stay?" Sally gasped incredulously.

"Most assuredly I mean you're to stay. Why not? You're modest and well-mannered, and you've got too much sense to try again to pull wool over my eyes, even if you're wicked enough to want to, which I don't believe. No; as far as you're concerned, your position here is far more firmly established now than an hour ago, when everything was against my liking you—in spite of the fact that I did—especially your loyalty to those hopeless ingrates!"

She fumed in silence for a moment. "I could have forgiven almost anything—but this! The insolence of it! To dare picture me to you—or anybody—as a silly old fool of a woman without the wit to protect herself from being fleeced by a gang of adventurers. My friends!" she broke off with a snort of superindignation. "My guests here a set of rogues and vagabonds—and worse!"

She flopped into her chair with a helpless "Oh dear!" and began to laugh.

"It's too ridiculous!" she exclaimed. "If it ever got out, I'd almost be ashamed to show my face in public again. Promise you'll never breathe a syllable—"

"Oh, I promise—I do promise!" Sally protested fervently. "But, Mrs. Gosnold—"

"Well, what now?"

"I suppose," said Sally, "the only way to show my gratitude is by serving you faithfully—"

"You might," the elder woman interposed in a quizzical turn, "spare me, if you can, a little affection, since it seems I've lost that of my sister's children, together with their respect!"

"I don't think you'll ever complain for want of that," Sally told her very seriously. "But can you afford to run the risk of the police coming here to find Sarah



Manvers, who disappeared last week after breaking into a house—burglarizing it—leaving her discarded clothing behind her for one positive clue—

"You must make your mind easy as to that; unless I'm vastly mistaken, no police will ever look for you in Gosnold House; if any did, they wouldn't be admitted; and if by any chance they did happen to get in, they wouldn't find Sarah Manvers. Please understand, you're to remain Sara Manwaring for some time to come—for good, if I think best. Don't imagine I'm going to permit you to resume your right name and spoil everything. I hope I make myself clear."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Gosnold—"

"And—attend to me—you're not to give Adele—or Walter, either, when he gets here, any reason to suspect you've confided in me. I wish everything to go on precisely as it has been going—so far as they can see. Avoid them as much as possible; when it isn't possible, give them a dose of their own medicine if necessary—I mean, lie. There's an explosion coming, but I don't wish it to happen until I'm sure who and what are going to be blown sky-high, and I am quite prepared to stand by and enjoy the fireworks. Meantime, don't let anybody frighten you; no matter how serious matters may seem or be represented to you, rely implicitly on me. And whatever is said to you that seems of any consequence—or if you should *see* anything—find some way to report quickly to me. Now what did you say you did with that jewel-case Adele gave you?"

Sally repeated her account of its hiding-place.

"You didn't unwrap it, you say. Well and good!" Mrs. Gosnold nodded intently. "Then don't; leave it as it is, and some time to-day, if I can manage without being observed, I'll drop into your room and have a look at the box myself. But you are on no consideration whatever to touch it until I give you leave."

"I understand."

"If Adele and Walter want to know what you've done with it, tell them the truth—you've done nothing. Say you've not yet found a good chance to. Tell them where it is, but assure them it's perfectly safe there."

"Yes, Mrs. Gosnold."

Momentarily the older woman was lost in a reverie of semimalicious cast, to judge

by the smile that faintly shadowed the firm lines of her handsome face.

"A surprise party—" she observed obscurely.

Of a sudden, with a sort of snap, she roused herself back to more immediate issues. "Oh, come! the morning almost gone already, and nothing accomplished! Off with you! But before you go, do, for goodness' sake, attend to your eyes; if some one were to see you going through the halls the way you are—it might be ruinous. Bathe them with cold water in the bath-room there—and you'll find plenty of powder and stuff on my dressing-table."

And while Sally hastened to profit by this advice, the other pursued: "You should school yourself never to cry, my girl. You're too sensitive and emotional by half. If you go on this way, at the least excuse—great Heavens! what a humid married life you'll lead! Now let me look at you. That's much better. You'll do very well—if only you've wit enough not to worry—to trust me, whatever the emergency. Now, please, get about my errands. And when you come back, tell Thomas to let me know. If I need you during the day I'll send for you."

As it happened, she didn't send for Sally before nightfall; but she kept her busy with commissions delivered by word of mouth—so busy, perhaps considerably, that the girl found little time to waste in futile fretting, but was ever conscious, when now and again her thoughts did inevitably revert to the status of her personal affairs, of contentment crooning in her heart like the soft refrain of some sweet, old song.

Her social education had made a gigantic forward stride with her surprising discovery that confession is good for the soul, that honesty in all things is not only expedient, but wholesome. If material advantage had accrued unto her through that act of desperate honesty, if she basked all this day long in the assurance of immunity from the consequences of her folly and imprudence, it was less with the arrogance of Fortune's favorite daughter than with the humility of one to whom life had measured out benefactions of which she was consciously undeserving. The assertion that the world owed her a living was forgotten; and if recalled, would have been revised to the sense that she owed the world the duty of honorable and conscientious living. If



her temper was tolerably exalted, it was well chastened to boot.

Thanks to the tardy advertisement of the fête, the avidity of a people ever seeking some new thing, and the fame of Abigail Gosnold as an entertainer of eccentric genius, that day could hardly be said to wane; rather, it waxed to its close in an atmosphere of electric excitement steadily cumulative. The colony droned like some huge dynamo with the rumor of secret preparation against the night. Other than servants scurrying to and fro on pressing but mysterious errands, few folk were visible in the afternoon; the drives and beaches, the lawns, terraces, courts, gardens, verandas, and casinos were one and all deserted.

At Gosnold House, below-stairs, in kitchens and servants' halls, and all about the grounds as well, a multitude of work-people swarmed like an invading army of ants. Astonishing feats of preparation were consummated as if by legerdemain. And though the routine of the household proceeded marvelously without apparent hitch or friction, luncheon and dinner degenerated into affairs of emptiest formality. At the latter, indeed, Mrs. Gosnold presided over an oddly balanced board; three-fourths of those present were men—fully half the feminine guests dining from trays in their rooms or else abstaining altogether, in order that not one precious moment might be lost to the creation of their improvised disguises. And the talk at table was singularly disconnected, with an average of interest uncommonly low. People were obviously saving themselves up. There was no lingering over tobacco; the last course served, the guests dispersed in all haste compatible with decency.

It was at this meal that Sally got her first glimpse of Savage since his arrival in the course of the afternoon. She had been far too busy to keep watch and unable to invent any plausible excuse for inquiring after him, but the thought of his return had never been far out of mind. However busy, she had not been able to dismiss entirely the consideration that Savage was bringing the first authentic news of whatever activities the police might have inaugurated in connection with the burglary and whatever their progress in pursuit of the clue furnished by the garments discarded in the bath-room. And all the reassurances of Mrs. Gosnold were

impotent to counteract apprehensions fostered by such reflections.

But there was the length and the width of the table between them. She had to be content with all that Savage found chance to accord her—a bow, a smile, and a glance down his nose significant of unspeakable intelligence.

She thought he looked a bit pale and worried and betrayed more nervousness than was natural in the man as she had come to know him.

Whether or not he had been accompanied by the threatened insurance adjuster (or detective!) she was unable to surmise; notwithstanding several strange faces in the number at table, she was inclined to believe that a person of such character would have been lodged somewhere in the village which served as the island's main port of entry, rather than brought to Gosnold House—already crowded with guests.

As soon as the company rose Savage maneuvered to the side of the girl, detaining her long enough to convey a surreptitious message under cover of apparently care-free greetings.

"Must have a talk," he muttered out of the corner of his mouth. "Something you ought to know immediately."

A pang of pure fear shot through her mind, but she retained sufficient command of herself not to betray her emotion or even to seem anxious to make an appointment with the man.

"Oh, there's no chance for that now," she evaded as per instructions, and with so successful a semblance of indifference that Savage was openly and profoundly perplexed. "I've heaps of things yet to do for Mrs. Gosnold—I'm really frightfully pushed for time even to dress."

"Yes—of course. But this talk has got to happen some time soon. However, it ought to be easy enough under our masks. What costume will you be wearing?"

"I don't know. Mrs. Gosnold promised to find something and send it to my room. I presume she must have forgotten—but perhaps it's there now."

"Well, keep an eye bright for me, then. I'll be Harlequin—an old costume I happened by sheer luck to have left here some years ago. Otherwise, I guess, I'd have to wrap up in a sheet and act like a dead one."

She laughed mechanically, murmured

"I must fly!" and forthwith dashed up the great staircase and to her room.

Her costume had not yet been delivered; she had still to wait half an hour by the clock; but there was plenty of detail wherewith to occupy her time. On the other hand, the routine of one's toilet is a famous incentive to thoughtfulness, and as she went automatically through the motions of beautifying herself and dressing her hair, Sally's mind took advantage of this, its first real freedom of the day, and focused sharply on her own concerns.

It reminded her, among other things, of the fact that she had not seen Lyttleton since an adventitious glimpse of him going in to breakfast just as she was leaving the house to deliver the batch of invitations.

She wondered idly about him, in an odd humor of tolerant superiority, as one might contemplate the presumption of an ill-bred child. And she wondered dumbly at herself, whom she found able to imagine without flinching an encounter with him of the mildly flirtatious description licensed by the masquerade. Would he know instinctively who she was and avoid her? Or have the impudence to renew his advances? Or would he fail to fathom her identity and so lay himself open to her castigation?

She did not for an instant forget that she was endued, not only by personal right as an injured woman herself at fault, but also by the authority of Mrs. Gosnold, with letters of marque and reprisal.

That she would penetrate at sight his disguise, whatever its character, she hadn't the faintest doubt.

But, then, woman's faith in her vaunted, if vaguely comprehended, faculty of intuition is a beautiful thing and a joy to her forever.

And she wondered what Savage would have to say to her. But in this phase her thoughts wore a complexion of far less self-assurance, notwithstanding the moral support of her employer. What could have happened in New York that he must need an early appointment to discuss it with her? What had been the outcome of that terribly incriminating clue, her name on the garments composing that sloughed chrysalis of yesterday? Was it possible that her comrades of the studio (Heavens! how historically remote and almost unreal seemed that well-hated chapter of existence!) had become anxious enough to notify the police of her long absence? In

such cases, she believed, something called a general alarm was issued—a description of the absentee was read to every member of the metropolitan police force, that it might be on the alert to apprehend or succor the lost, strayed, or stolen. Could that possibly have been done in the case of missing Sarah Manvers? And, if so, could the police detectives possibly have overlooked the fact that the name of the wanting woman was identical with the name of the woman wanted?

For all the strength of her tower of refuge Sally shivered.

And she realized with a twinge of sincere regret that she would never dare return and share these happier fortunes with those two unhappy partners of her days of suffering and privation.

She wasn't heartless; she had thought frequently of them before, but always with the notion that she would some day, and by happy chance some day not distant, reveal her transfigured self to them and, out of the plenitude of her blessings, lend them a little, and much more than a little, aid and comfort. Something of that sort, indeed, was the least she could do; it was but justice; it was simply repayment of acknowledged indebtedness. And now, it seemed, it might never be!

From this she passed into new wonder and bewilderment at the duplicity of Savage and his sister, and the mystery of their motives and the still deeper mystery of their actions, and the inscrutable mystery of the boat that had landed on the beach of Gosnold House at three o'clock in the morning.

All of which led her suddenly to make sure of the jewel-box.

It was no longer in its place of concealment.

Mrs. Gosnold, she assumed, must have removed it.

But for what purpose? To what end?

A knock on the door announced the arrival of her costume by the hands of Mrs. Gosnold's personal maid.

"And Mrs. Gosnold says please will you come to her boudoir, miss, directly you're dressed?"

"Tell her I'll be there in fifteen minutes."

Moderate disappointment waited upon recognition of the character of her assigned disguise. She had had visions of something very splendid, something almost barbaric

in its richness—had nursed a day-dream of herself flaunting radiantly through the chiaroscuro of the moonlight fête, like some great jeweled butterfly.

After that vision the modest garb of a Quaker Maid seemed something of a come-down, even though the costumer's conception of a Quakeress had been considerably influenced by musical comedy standards.

But her disappointment was fugitive. After all, the dress was of exquisite quality and finish, and it became her wondrous well. She took from the room the memory of a very fetching figure in a gown of dove-gray *crêpe-de-chine*, the bosom crossed by glistening bands of white, the skirts relieved by a little apron of lace and linen, white bands at wrist and throat, a close-fitting cap of lace covering her hair, her feet and ankles disclosed discreetly in stockings of dove-gray silk and suede slippers of the same neutral shade, set off by silver buckles—the whole rendered the more tempting by an almost jaunty cloak of gray satin lined with white.

With the addition of the mask (which she wore to pass through the corridor in memory of Mrs. Gosnold's injunction) the effect was quite positively fascinating.

And that mask proved to be far from superfluous, for when she followed her knock into the boudoir of her mistress she was thunderstruck to find nearly two dozen people, men and women, gathered together there, sitting and standing about in a silence which seemed curiously constrained, taken in connection with their festival attire. For they were all in costume and, with the single exception of Mrs. Gosnold, all masked.

This last was very brilliant in the billowy silken skirts, puffed sleeves, tight bodice, and wide ruff of Queen Elizabeth, and carried off well the character of that hot-tempered majesty, making no effort to disguise the fact that she was deeply wounded and profoundly agitated.

She sat regally enthroned upon a spindle-shank chair that matched her *escritoire*, and betrayed her impatient humor by the quick tapping of one exquisitely shod foot. And the others seemed to wait upon her pleasure in a silence almost of subjugation—a nervous, unnatural, ominous hush.

It was broken on Sally's entrance by the mistress of Gosnold House, who nodded without a sign of recognition and said in a bleak manner thus far in Sally's experi-

ence wholly foreign to the nature of the speaker: "Come in, please, shut the door, and find some place to sit down. Retain your mask. There are two guests wanting, and we must wait for them."

There were no chairs vacant, and a majority of the men were already standing, but another (by whose unquestionably authentic cowboy costume Sally was sure she recognized Trego) rose and silently surrendered to her his place.

She accepted it with a stifled murmur of thanks.

The slight stir occasioned by her addition to the company subsided, and the sense of constraint became even more marked. Nobody appeared to care to know his neighbor; there was no whispering, no murmuring, even the indispensable fidgeting was accomplished in an apprehensive and apologetic manner. A few men breathed audibly, a few fans stirred imperceptibly an atmosphere supercharged with radiations from so many human bodies added to the natural heat of a summer's evening; there were no other sounds or movements of any consequence. Sally became uncomfortably susceptible to the undercurrent of high nervous tension, conscious of a slight dew on her hands and forehead, and surprisingly conscious of the sonorous thumping of her heart. Unaccountably, nobody else seemed to hear it.

Perhaps they were all listening to their own hearts. But why—

She wasted a few moment vainly scrutinizing the masks in her immediate neighborhood. Their eyes gleamed uncannily through the slits in the black silk, and when she intercepted a direct glance, it was hastily lowered or averted, as if there were something indecorous in acknowledging her bewildered appeal.

Again, perhaps, they were as much puzzled by her incognito as she was by theirs.

Those small shapes of black, silk-covered cardboard proved singularly effective, even when they concealed no more than the nose and the cheeks immediately beneath the eyes. She found it surprisingly difficult to fix an identification, even when satisfied she could not be in error; but she was measurably sure of Mrs. Artemas beneath Diana's Grecian draperies, of Trego in his Western guise, of Mercedes Pride in the conventional make-up of a witch. The rest at once provoked and eluded conjecture; she fancied she knew

Lyttleton in the doublet and hose of Sir Francis Drake, but could not feel certain; divested of his peculiarly well-tailored personality, he was astonishingly like half a dozen other men among the guests.

Presently Mrs. Gosnold's maid, Marie, appeared in the doorway to the bedroom, holding in her hand a number of envelopes, and at a nod from her mistress began to thread the gathering, presenting one envelope to each guest, together with a small pencil such as is commonly attached to dance-programs.

The incident provided a grateful interruption to a situation that was rapidly assuming in Sally's esteem the grotesqueness of a dream. Remembering that this was Gosnold House, the focal point of America's most self-contained summer colony, and that all these subdued and inarticulate masqueraders were personages daily exploited by the press as the brightest stars in the social firmament, the incongruity of this dumb gathering seemed as glaring, as bizarre as anything her fancy could conceive.

And when her envelope was handed her and she had lifted the flap and withdrawn an oblong correspondence-card bearing the monogram A-G and nothing else, the final effect of meaningless mystery seemed to have been consummated.

But this, as it happened, was coincident with the arrival of the last two guests—one of whom was a lithe and shapely Harlequin in party-colored tights, and the other a bewitchingly blond Columbine—and then the purpose of the meeting was soon exposed.

With no more expression than she had employed in the case of Sally, Mrs. Gosnold saluted the last comers with a request to enter and be seated, then directed her maid to go out into the hall, close the door, and stand guard to prevent eavesdropping. When the door was closed she plunged directly into a prepared address.

"I owe every one an apology," she began with a fugitive, placating smile, "for all this inconvenience and nonsense—as it must seem. But I'm sure you will bear with me when you know the circumstances, which are extraordinary, and my motive, quite a natural one.

"We are now," she pursued with a swift glance that embraced the room, "just twenty-three, including myself; that is to say, everybody who slept here last night,

and one or two more. And your masks are a sure screen for any betrayal of emotion when I tell you why I have asked you to oblige me by meeting here. So please retain them whatever happens."

She paused, made a little gesture of deprecation. "I would rather almost anything than be obliged to say what I must.

"One of us," she announced deliberately, "is a thief. These rooms were entered some time last night, while I was asleep, and all my personal jewelry was stolen. Please no one interrupt. I will answer all the natural questions before I finish.

"The robbery was not difficult to accomplish. The island is well-policed, there has not been a burglary in its history, and I am a careless old woman. When I take my things off at night I leave them on my dressing-table. Marie, my maid, puts them away in the morning. I have three large jewel-cases, none of which is ever locked except when I travel. I have never had a safe. The jewel-cases are stored away in unlocked dresser-drawers. My bedroom and boudoir doors are never locked. And I am a sound sleeper. There is—and was—nothing to prevent the thief from entering after I had turned out my light and, employing ordinary discretion, helping him or herself. Which is precisely what happened last night. Every piece of jewelry was taken from my dressing-table, and the three jewel-cases from their drawers.

"I discovered my loss promptly after waking up this morning. I said nothing, but after setting in motion the machinery for to-night's amusement, which I have long had in mind, devoted the day to a quiet investigation, as a result of which I am convinced that the house servants had no part in the robbery. In short, I am persuaded that the thief is now in this room. I do not, however, wish to know his or her identity. And I am especially anxious to avoid the scandal which must follow if this affair leaks out.

"Finally, I feel so sure you all share my horror of publicity and my aversion to knowing positively who committed this crime that I ask you all silently to pledge yourselves to secrecy—and then to humor my plan for regaining my jewels and covering up the affair completely. I have thought it might be accomplished this way:

"Marie has given you each a card, an envelope, and a pencil. The cards and en-



velopes have no distinguishing marks. The pencils are all alike. The authorship of anything you may care to communicate cannot possibly be traced, if you will be careful not to write but to print.

"Please take the cards away with you to your rooms, and please each of you remain there at least five minutes before coming out. Then take the cards in the envelopes, sealed, down-stairs and deposit them in the mail-box. It will not be unlocked until one o'clock. By that time I shall expect the thief to have deposited my jewelry in some hiding-place about the house or grounds—a dozen will suggest themselves on a moment's thought—the spot to be indicated on the card. By this method ample time is granted in which to make restitution with complete immunity from recognition, the secret will be kept, the scandal hushed up, and, best of all, I shall be able to continue considering each and every one of you my very dear friend.

"But"—and her handsome old face darkened with the shadow of the determination that rang in her tone—"if this scheme should fail, and the thief refuse to make restitution, then, though it break my heart, I shall feel without alternative other than to take certain steps—steps which I cannot now contemplate without positive loathing, so repugnant are they to me.

"Now I have finished," Mrs. Gosnold said quietly. "I am sorry to have imposed in this way upon your patience; but it seemed, I think you'll grant me, warranted and necessary. I thank you, and hope you'll forgive me. And now will you please return to your rooms, without asking me any questions, and do as I have begged? And I sincerely hope that this wretched business may not interfere with your enjoyment to-night. For my part, I am so confident of the success of this scheme that I mean to consider that I have not been robbed—that everything is as it has always been, and as it will be after the envelopes are opened at one o'clock."

She ceased; there was the stir of a general rising and movement toward the door, amid a hum of excited murmurings.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### MARPLOT

ONCE sheltered by the privacy of her bedchamber and seated before the little

white-enamel desk with its chints-covered fittings that suited so well the simple, cheerful scheme of decoration, the girl lingered long, an idle pencil caught between fingers infirm of purpose. Her gaze was fixed as if hypnotized to the blank white face of the bit of cardboard that lay before her on the blotting-pad, her thoughts far astray in a dark jungle of horror, doubts, suspicions, fears.

Immediately after shutting herself in she had gone straight to this desk, possessed by the notion that there was a message requiring to be written upon the card, one self-exculpatory sentence which had framed itself in her mind as she sped down the corridor from that remarkable meeting in Mrs. Gosnold's rooms.

"I have not told you everything—but I am innocent," thus ran the words which she felt were demanded of her and a legitimate privilege, her duty to herself in sheer self-preservation. And as they wrote themselves down before her mental vision she saw two heavy strokes of the pen underlining "everything," and her own true name, Sarah Manvers, following in the place of the signature—no more "Sara Manwaring," Mrs. Gosnold's explicit commands to the contrary notwithstanding!

But that had been an impulse only natural in the first shock of horror inevitably attending the disclosure of the robbery, to clear herself; or, rather, to re-affirm her innocence.

For with second thought had come the consideration: Was she not already cleared, was her innocence not already established?

She was prepared to believe that Mrs. Gosnold knew everything. That extraordinary woman! What had she not known, indeed? Mark how cunningly she had drawn from Sally the admission that she had been up and about the house and grounds long after she had gone to her bedchamber for the night!—at the very time, most probably, when the robbery was being done! And that had been by way of preface to the pledge she had made Sally of her protection before startling a confession from the girl—a pledge not only given in advance, but by implication at least renewed when the truth was out.

If she had believed Sally guilty, or party to the crime, or even in possession of guilty knowledge of it, would she have made that generous promise?



She was kind of heart, was Mrs. Gosnold, but she was nobody's fool; if she had not been well satisfied in her own mind as to the thief she would never have so committed herself to Sally, for she was no one to give her word lightly or, as she herself had said, to bait a trap with fair words and flattery.

In vain Sally searched her memory for anything to warrant an assumption that her mistress had been in any way ignorant of that black business of the small hours. She had neither denied such knowledge nor asserted it, but had simply permitted Sally to leave out of her account all reference to the overnight adventure.

And all that assorted consistently with her statement that she did not wish to learn the thief's identity, as well as with her invention of a means for obtaining restitution without such intelligence.

So Sally ended by believing it rather more than possible that Mrs. Gosnold knew as well as the girl herself who had consummated the crime—or, at all events, shared the damning suspicions engendered in Sally's mind by circumstantial evidence.

Lyttleton, of course. Sally entertained but the slenderest doubts of his black guilt.

If innocent, what had he been carrying hidden in the hollow of his arm? What had he left down there on the beach? Why had he left it there? Why such anxiety to escape observation as to make the man alert to notice Sally's head peering over the parapet of the landing at the head of the cliff? And if he had been employed in no way to be ashamed of, and had no consequences to fear, why that roundabout way up the cliff again and that ambush of his watcher?

And why those signals between window and yacht, if not to apprise the latter that something had been consummated, that the coast was clear for its tender to come in and take away the plunder?

It would seem, then, that Mr. Lyttleton must have had a confederate in the house, and for that rôle Mrs. Standish was plainly designated. An understanding of some close sort between her and Lyttleton had been quite evident from the very first day. And whose bedchamber window had shown the signals, if not hers? Not the pretty young widow's—not in any likelihood Mrs. Artemas's. To believe the latter intimate with the affair was to assume an under-

standing between her and Lyttleton—or else Trego.

Trego!

Sally was conscious of a slight mental start, a flurry of thoughts and sensations, of judgment in conflict with emotions.

Why not Trego? A likelier man than Lyttleton for such a job, indeed. Trego had such force of personality as to excuse the suspicion that what he might desire he would boldly go after and possess himself of. With a nature better adapted to the planning and execution of adventures demanding courage, daring, and indifference to ethical considerations, Trego was capable of anything. Lyttleton was of flimsier stuff, or instinct was untrustworthy.

But after a little the girl sighed and shook her head. It was less plausible, this effort of hers, to cast Trego for the rôle of villain. True, he might have invented that story of the marks on the sands; true again, he might have acted in accord with Mrs. Artemas. But those were far-fetched possibilities. Unless, indeed, professed distrust and dislike of Mrs. Artemas had been altogether ingenious, a mask manufactured in anticipation of just this development.

No, it wasn't likely of Trego. She could not overlook the impression he conveyed of rugged honesty and straightforwardness. However strong the aversion he inspired, Sally could ignore neither that impression nor yet its correlative, that if he was not an over-righteous scorn of lies, he was the sort that would suffer much rather than seek to profit by a lie.

She perceived, with a little qualm of contrition, that she had been eager to condemn the man out of sheer, unreasonable prejudice, all too ready to do him injustice in her thoughts. Unpleasant though she found his personality, harshly though his crudities grated upon her sensibilities, she owed him gratitude for an intimate service in an emergency when she had been only too glad of his personal intervention; and it were rank ingratitude to wish him ill, just as it was frankly base of her to be eager to think ill of him.

Repentance had got hold of the girl by the nape of her neck; it shook her roughly, if justly. For a little time she cringed in shame of herself and was torn by desire in some way to make amends to this animal of a Trego, whom she so despised because he refused to play up to the snob in her

and ape the manners of his putative betters as she was keen to ape them.

Perhaps it had needed this ugly happening, or something as unsettling, to reveal the girl to herself in a true light—at least a light less flattering than she found pleasant.

Certainly its aftermath in the way of private communion served well to sober and humble Sally in her own esteem. Outside the immediate field of her reverie she was now conscious of the words "sycophant" and "parasite" buzzing like mosquitoes about the head of some frantic wooer of sleep, elusive, pitiless, exasperating, making it just so much more difficult to concentrate upon this importunate problem of her duty.

If she was not to protest her own innocence, what ought she to say upon that card?

Was it consistent with loyalty to Mrs. Gosnold to keep silence about matters that might clear up the mystery and repair the wrong-doing?

But how could she attack another? How bring herself to point the finger of accusation at Lyttleton?

On the terrace outside her window a string-orchestra tuned and hummed softly in the perfumed night. Rumor of gay voices and light laughter came to her in ever greater volume. Before her distracted gaze swam a view of the formal garden, aglimmer like a corner of fairy-land, with the hundreds of tiny lamps half concealed amid the foliage of its shrubs and hedges.

She knew that she must rouse herself and be seen below; not only must her message take its place with its twenty odd fellows in the mail-box, but nothing could seem so incriminating as prolonged and deliberate absence from the fête.

Yet she had little desire now for what two hours since had seemed a prospect of bewitching promise. The music rose and fell in magic measure without its erstwhile power to stir her pulses. There was not one in all that company below for whom she cared or who cared for her, none but whose interest in her presence or absence was as slight as hers, and her mood shrank from the thought of such casual and conventional gallantries as the affair would inevitably bring forth. She was in no humor to-night to dance and banter and coquette on an empty and desolate heart.

Thus it was made clear to her that she

had never been, and never would be, in such humor; that in just this circumstance resided all her insuperable dissociation from these people of light-hearted lives; that this was why she was and forever must remain, however long and intimate her life among them, an outsider; because what she needed and demanded, the blind and inarticulate impulse which had made her aspire to their society, was not the need of a wide, social life, but the need of a narrow and constricting love.

And all the love that she had thus far found in this earthly paradise had proved a delusion, a mockery, and a snare.

Presently she stirred with reluctance, sighed, resigned herself to the prospect of a night of hollow, grinning merriment, and turned back to contemplation of that importunate card. And while still she hesitated, pencil poised, with neither knock nor any sort of announcement whatsoever the door flew open, and through it, like a fury in a fairy's dress, flew Mrs. Standish clothed as Columbine.

She shut the door sharply, put her back to it, and keeping her gaze fixed on the amazed girl, turned the key.

Her passion was as evident as it was senseless. Bare of the mask that swung from silken strings caught in her fingers, her face shone bright with the incandescence of seething agitation. Her eyes were hard, her mouth tight-lipped, her temper patently set on a hair-trigger.

Quite automatically, on this interruption, Sally rose and, standing, slipped the card into its envelope, an action which brought from the older woman a curt, imperative gesture.

"What have you written there?" she demanded brusquely.

Before answering Sally carried the envelope to her lips, moistened its flap, and sealed it. Thus she gained time to collect herself and compose her attitude, which turned out unexpectedly to be something cold and critical.

"Why do you ask?" she returned.

"Because I've a right to know. If it concerns me—"

"Why should it?" Sally cut in.

"You know very well that if you breathe a syllable about last night—"

"But what about last night? You came to my room while I was inexplicably out and waited till I returned. I can't see why you should care if that became known."

"Have you written anything about that?" Mrs. Standish demanded insistently.

"And even if I had, and you were merely afraid of being embarrassed, I couldn't very well drag you in without incriminating myself, now could I?"

"I don't care to bandy words with you, young woman. Tell me—"

"You needn't to please me, you know. And I sha'n't tell you anything."

"Why—"

"My business," said Sally, with all the insolence she knew how to infuse into her tone. "I think we covered that question rather completely last night—or rather this morning. I imagined it was settled. In fact, it was. I don't care to reopen it; but I will say this—or repeat it, if you prefer: I'm not going to permit you to interfere in my private affairs."

"You refuse to tell me what you've written?"

"For the last time—positively."

"See here," Mrs. Standish ventured, after a baffled moment, "be reasonable. There's no sense in making me lose my temper—"

"I'm sure I don't wish you to."

"Then tell me—"

"No!"

"Must I threaten you?"

Sally elevated supercilious eyebrows. "If you like."

"I have a way to force you to obey me."

"Oh?" There was an accent in this innocent syllable cunningly calculated to madden.

"Very well. If you will have it. Do you recall a certain letter of introduction?"

"Why—no."

"That you brought me from Mrs. Cornwallis English?"

"What do you mean?"

"Don't be stupid. You surely are not prepared to deny that you came to me last Wednesday, looking for work, with what purported to be a letter of recommendation from Mrs. English."

"Please go on."

"Well," Mrs. Standish announced triumphantly, "I kept that letter, of course, and now I've had occasion to look closely, I find it's a forgery."

"Please!" Sally faltered.

"I tell you, I have safe in my possession a letter recommending you to me and signed with the forged signature of Mrs. Cornwallis English. If necessary to pro-

tect myself, I shall not scruple to exhibit that letter."

"Oh!" With a gasp of incredulity Sally sat down and stared at this impudent *intrigante*.

"Now will you tell me what you've written? No. I won't trust you to tell me. Give me that envelope. I'll see for myself."

"It isn't possible," Sally said, "that you would do anything so cruel and unjust and dishonest!"

"Dishonest? I dare say you consider yourself a judge—"

"I can't believe it of you, Mrs. Standish."

"That's your personal affair, of course. You've asked me not to interfere—"

She permitted Sally to think it over, meantime coming closer, holding out her hand with an effect of confident patience.

"Surely you wouldn't show that forgery you've made up to Mrs. Gosnold?"

"I don't know what you mean by 'forgery I've made up.' I sha'n't hesitate to show the forgery you brought me."

"I guessed all along," Sally told her, "that you were not what you made yourself out to be, neither a good woman nor a kind one. But I never for a moment imagined you would stoop to such infamy—"

"Now that's settled, be good enough—"

"But what makes you so afraid I'll tell Mrs. Gosnold about last night?"

"To protect yourself, of course. I don't believe you mean to confess—"

"Confess!"

"Take advantage of this opportunity to restore the jewels—and get off without punishment. Probably you can't. Probably the man you met outside and gave them to is by now so far away that you couldn't, even if you wanted to—"

"Wait a minute. Let me get this straight. I don't want to make any mistake."

"Sensible of you, I'm sure!"

"You really mean to accuse me of this abominable thing?"

"I know no reason to believe you incapable of it. And you did meet a man out there last night."

"Then why do you hesitate to inform Mrs. Gosnold? Isn't it your duty?"

"I'm willing to give you the benefit of the doubt, providing you—"

"Have you consulted Mr. Lyttleton about this?"

That shot told. Mrs. Standish paused with an open mouth. "Mr. Lyttleton!" she exclaimed, recovering, in a tone that implied complete ignorance of the existence of any such person.

"Mr. Lyttleton," Sally repeated. "You know very well it was he to whom I was talking out there—and I know you know it."

"Say I do, for the sake of the argument; do you imagine Mr. Lyttleton would sacrifice himself—admit that he got up and left the house, for whatever reason, last night after going to bed—to save you?"

"No," Sally conceded; "I don't expect anything from either you or any of your friends. But Mr. Lyttleton will find the facts hard to deny. There was a witness, you must know—though I've no doubt it's news to you. He wouldn't be likely to mention that to you. In fact, I can see from your face he didn't. But there was—"

"Who?" the woman stammered.

"That's for you to find out. Why not ask Mr. Lyttleton? It's no good, Mrs. Standish. I don't understand your motive, and I'd rather not guess at it; but I'm not a child to be scared by a bogey. Show your forged letter to Mrs. Gosnold, if you like—or come with me and we'll both show it to her—"

"Are you mad? Do you want to be exposed?"

"I'm not afraid, Mrs. Standish—and you are!"

After an instant the woman's eyes clouded and fell. "I don't know what you mean," she faltered.

"I mean that this scene has gone on long enough. I'm sick and tired of it—and it isn't getting you anything, either. Good night!"

With this Sally marched to the door, turned the knob, and found it locked and the key missing.

"The key, please, Mrs. Standish."

"Not till you tell me—" the other began with a flash of reviving spirit.

Sally advanced a finger toward the push-button. "Must I call one of the maids to let me out?"

Capitulation was signaled with a distracted gesture. "Miss Manwaring, do tell me—"

"Nothing—I'll tell you nothing! Give me that key."

"Promise you haven't written—"

"The key!"

It was surrendered. "Well—but that jewel-case; what have you done with it?"

"I've hidden it."

"Where?"

"I'll tell you to-morrow—perhaps."

Opening the door, Sally strode out with her head high and the light of battle in her eyes.

A hesitant, pleading call followed her, but she wouldn't hear it. Pursuit and continuation of the scene, with or without another specious semblance of apology and reconciliation such as had terminated their previous passage at arms, was out of the question; the corridor was lively with young women in gayest plumage, fluttering to and from the dressing-rooms, and Sally was among them even before she remembered to reassume her mask.

At the head of the main staircase she paused, searching narrowly the shifting groupings of the animated scene disclosed by the wide reception-hall. She was looking for Queen Elizabeth's imperious ruff, anxious to find and keep in the shadow of that great lady's sovereign presence; and she was also looking for the leather-banded sombrero of the cowboy and the skull-cap of Harlequin, with a concern keen to avoid those gentlemen.

Considerably to her surprise, still more to her disappointment, not even the first of these was in evidence (as Sally had made sure Mrs. Gosnold would be) waiting to welcome her guests just within the doorway to the *porte-cochère*.

None the less, the lady must be found, and that without delay; the envelope, with its blank enclosure half crushed in Sally's hand, was an ever-present reminder of her duty first to herself, secondly to her employer. If she had written nothing, and but for Mrs. Standish would have kept her counsel till the last minute, the latter's threat of denunciation had lent the temper of the girl another complexion altogether; as Sally saw it, she no longer had any choice other than to find Mrs. Gosnold as quickly as possible and make complete the revelation of last night's doings. And her mind was fixed to this, with a cast of angry pertinacity that would prove far from easy to oppose or even to modify; whether or not the hostess wished it, she must suffer herself to be informed immediately and completely.

Threading a swift way in and out among



the masks clustered upon the broad staircase in groups of twos and threes, laughing, chattering, and watching the restless play of life and color in the hall, she gained the floor and then the letter-box, near the door where she had thought to find her employer.

A distrustful scrutiny of the near-by masks failed to single out one of those she had marked and memorized in the boudoir, and without detecting any overt interest in her actions, she slipped her blameless message into the box, then turned back and, steadfast to her purpose, made her way forward through the throng to the veranda.

After the glare of the hall the dusk of the veranda was as grateful as its coolth and spaciousness. Beyond the rail the purple-and-silver night pressed close and beckoned; its breath was sweet, its pulses throbbled with the rhythmic passion of violins that sobbed and sang in hiding somewhere in the shadows. Up and down that broad, smooth flooring gay couples swayed, eye to eye and breast to breast, anachronisms reconciled by the witchery of the dance. And when Sally darted across to and down the steps she found the lawns, the terrace, and the formal garden, too, peopled with paired shadows, murmurous with soft voices and low-pitched laughter.

And she who quartered so swiftly and so diligently that maze of lights and shadows found nowhere the one she wanted, but everywhere the confirmation of her secret thought—that there was no place here for her, no room, no welcome. On every hand love lurked, lingered, languished, but not for her. Whichever way she turned she saw some lover searching for his mistress, but not for her. They crossed her path and paused and stared, sometimes they spoke and looked deep into her eyes and harkened to the voice with which she answered them, giving back jest for jest—and they muttered excuses and hurried on; she was not for them.

It was as if life and fate conspired to humble her spirit and prove her ambitious of place beyond her worth; to persuade her that she was by birth, and must resign herself to remain always, outcast.

Forlorn and haunted, she circled back to the house, and on impulse sought again the boudoir door.

Marie answered, but shook her head;

no, she could not say where Mrs. Gosnold might be found.

Impulse again took her out by the door to the drive. Motors were still arriving and departing, to return at a designated hour, but here, at what might be termed the back of Gosnold House—if that mansion could be said to have either back or front—here on the landward side was little light or noise or movement. And after an undecided moment on the steps beneath the *porte-cochère* the Quakeress stepped down and out into the blackness of the shadow cast by the western wing, a deep shadow, dense and wide, from the pale wall of the house to the edge of the moon-white lawn.

She moved slowly on through this pleasant space of semidarkness, footfalls muffled by the close-trimmed turf, her emotions calming a little from the agitation which had been waxing ever more high and strong in her with each successive crisis of the night. Here the breeze was warm and bland, the music and the laughter a remote rumor, stars glimmered in a dome of lapis lazuli; peace was to be distilled of such things by the contemplative mind, peace and a sweet, sad sense of the beauty and pain of life. No place more fit than this could one wish wherein to shelter and nurse bruised illusions.

Insensibly she drew near the corner of the building, in abstraction so deep and still that she was almost upon them when she appreciated the fact that people were talking just beyond that high, white shoulder of stone, and was struck by the personal significance of a phrase that still echoed in ears which it had at first found heedless: “. . . Quaker costume, gray and white, with a cloak . . .”

It never occurred to the girl to stop and eavesdrop; but between that instant of reawakened consciousness and the moment when she came around the corner, three voices sealed an understanding:

“You’ve simply got to make her listen to reason—”

“Oh, leave that to my well-known art!”

“She’ll see a great light before one o’clock or I’m—”

Silence fell like a thunderclap as the Quaker Girl confronted Harlequin, Columbine, and Sir Francis Drake.

She said coolly: “You were speaking of me, I believe?”

Drake stepped back, swore in his false



beard, and disappeared round the corner in a twinkling.

Columbine snapped like the shrew she masked: "You little sneak!"

And Harlequin capped that with an easy laugh: "Oh, do keep your temper, Adele. You've less tact than any woman that ever breathed, I verily believe. Cut along now; I'll square matters for you with Miss Manwaring—if it's possible."

With a stifled exclamation Columbine caught her cloak round her and followed Drake.

The accent of the comic was not lost upon the girl. She could not but laugh a little at Harlequin's undisguised discomfiture.

"So you're nominated for the office of peacemaker, Mr. Savage!"

"I'm afraid so." He shuffled, nervously slapping his well-turned calves with Harlequin's lath-sword. "I swear," he complained, "I do believe Adele is crazier than most women *most* of the time. She's just been telling me what a fool she made of herself with you. I'm awfully glad you turned up when you did—"

"I noticed that, believe me!"

"Oh, I mean it. Ever since dinner I've been looking for an opportunity to explain things to you, but until Adele told me your costume just now—"

"Well?" Sally inquired in a patient tone as he broke off.

"We can't talk here. It's no good place—as you've just proved. Besides, I've got an appointment with another lady." He grinned gracelessly. "No, not what you think—not philandering—but in connection with this same business. I've got to butter thick with diplomacy an awful lot of mistaken apprehensions before I can set Don and Adele right, after that confounded foolishness of theirs last night—and this rotten robbery coming on top of it, to make things look black! It's a frightful, awful mix-up, really, but as innocent as daylight, if you only understand it. Look here, won't you give me a show to explain?"

"Why, I'm here, and I can't help listening."

"No. I mean later. I can't stop now, really."

"How much later?"

"Let's see. It's nearly midnight, and all this has got to be cleared up and set straight before one. Do be patient with

me until a quarter to one, now won't you please?"

"I may be busy then."

"Oh, come! That's all swank, and you know it. Besides, you do owe me, at least, some little consideration. I don't mean that, exactly—our account's pretty well squared, the way I see it. But, after all, life's a give-and-take affair. Say you'll meet me at a quarter to one?"

"Well. Where?"

He appeared to take thought. "It's got to be somewhere off the beaten track. And you're not afraid of the dark. Would you mind coming as far as the gate to the drive?"

"Back there, beyond the trees?"

"I mean the gateway to the main road."

"I wonder why you want me there, of all places! Oh, never mind!" She forestalled a protest of injured innocence. "I'm not in the least afraid to find out. Yes. I'll be there at a quarter to one."

"You're a brick!" Savage declared fervently. "You won't regret being so decent to me. Now I'll run along and be a diplomatist."

He cut a light-hearted caper, just to prove he could, and slashed the air gaily with his wooden sword, then bowed low and skipped round the corner, leaving Sally even more puzzled than before, but somehow placated—comforted by a sense of her own consequence conjured up by the way in which apparently she could manage people—Savage, for instance.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MAGIC

FOR several seconds after Savage had made off Sally delayed there, alone on the empty lawn in the westerly shadow of Gosnold House, doubting what next to do, where next to turn in quest of Mrs. Gosnold; questioning the motive for that furtive meeting which she had surprised, wondering at Savage's insistence on a spot so remote and inconvenient for their appointment, and why it must needs be kept in so underhand a fashion, and whether she had been wise to consent to it and would be wise to keep it. She was at a loss how to fill in the time until the hour nominated, shrinking alike from the lights and gaiety of the hall, the supper-room, and the veranda, and the romantic, love-sick peace of

the moonlit lawns and gardens. Altogether she was in a most complicated, distracted, uncertain, and unhappy frame of mind.

Then a latch clicked softly, the hinges of a shutter whined, and the startled young woman found herself staring up into the face of Mrs. Gosnold—a pallid oval against the dark background of an unlighted window not two feet above Sally's head.

She gasped, but respected the admonition of a finger pressed lightly upon the lady's smiling lips.

"S-s-s-sh!" said Mrs. Gosnold mysteriously, with cautious glances right and left.

"There's no one here," Sally assured her in tones appropriately guarded. "You've been listening—"

Mrs. Gosnold nodded with a mischievous twinkle. "I have that!"

"You heard—"

"Something—not much—not enough. If you had only been a few minutes later—"

"I'm sorry, but I've been looking for you everywhere. Please, may I come in and tell you something?"

"Not now—"

"It's very important—something you ought to know at once."

"Oh, my dear!" the woman sighed with genuine regret, "I know already far more than I care to know!"

"But this—"

"Not now, I say. I've been too frequently and too long away from my guests as it is. I'll have to show myself for a little while. Then, come to my room in half an hour."

"At half past twelve?"

"Yes, and don't be late. Now do run along and have a good time."

The shutter was drawn gently to, and Sally, with an embittered smile for the unconscious irony of that parting injunction, moved slowly on toward the front of the house.

But it was true that she felt a little less disconsolate now than she had two minutes ago; after all, it seemed, she wasn't altogether friendless and forsaken, and as for those doubts and questions which so perplexed her, they would all be resolved and answered once she had opportunity to lay them, together with the story of last night, before the judgment of her benefactress.

Still, if she reckoned confidently upon

her hostess, she reckoned not wisely without her host, whose mask to-night was that of a sardonic destiny. And when a tentative venture into the throngs on the veranda had been discouraged by the spirited advances of a forward young Cavalier who chose to consider his honor piqued, first by her demure Quaker garb, then by her unresponsiveness, Sally was glad enough to fall back upon the comparative quiet and solitude of the moon-drenched gardens. Whereupon her destiny grinned a heartless grin and arranged to throw her to the lions that, all unsuspected, raged in the maiden bosom of Mercedes Pride.

The tireless ingenuity with which that rampant spinster devised ways and means of rendering herself a peripatetic pest had long since won the ungrudged admiration of Sally, who elected to be amused more than annoyed by the impertinences, the pretentiousness, the fawning adulation, and the corrosive jealousy of Mrs. Gosnold's licensed pick-thank. And when she had first divined the woman beneath the disguise of the witch Sally had wondered what new method of making a sprightly nuisance of herself Miss Pride had invented to go with her impersonation.

It proved, naturally enough, remembering the limitations of a New England maiden's imagination, to be compulsory fortune-telling with the aid of cards, a crystal ball, the palm of the victim's hand, unlimited effrontery, and a "den" rigged up in a corner of a hedge with a Navajo blanket for a canopy and for properties two wooden stools, a small folding table, a *papier-mâché* skull, a jointed wooden snake, an artificial pumpkin-head with a candle in it, and a black cat tethered by a string to a stake in the ground and wishing he had never been born.

Within this noisome lair the sorceress squatted and practised her unholy arts upon all comers without mercy or distinction as to race, caste, sex, age, color, or previous condition of servitude. And when trade slackened (as inevitably it did when "the young people" for whose "amusement" this mummery ostensibly was staged asserted their *ennui* by avoiding the neighborhood) Ecstatica, nothing daunted, would rise up and go forth and stalk her prey among the more mature, dragging them off forcibly by the hand, when needs must, to sit at her table and

sympathize with the unfortunate cat and humor her nonsense.

Thus she inveigled Sally when the latter unwarily wandered her way.

Miss Pride knew her victim perfectly, but for the sake of appearances kept up the semblance of mystification.

"Sit you there, my pretty," she gabbled vivaciously, two hands on Sally's shoulders, urging her to rest on one of the stools. "Don't be afraid of my simple magic; the black art has nothing to do with the lore of the wise old woman. Just show me your rosy palm, and I will tell you your fortune. No, you needn't cross my palm with silver; I will ply my mystic trade and tell your future all for the sake of your pretty eyes."

She peered, blinking, with make-believe myopia, into the hollow of Sally's hand.

"Ah, yes, yes!" she grunted, "you have an amiable and affectionate disposition; you love pretty things to wear and every sort of pleasure. There is your gravest fault and greatest danger, pretty: love of clothes and pleasure and—forgive the wise old woman's plain speaking—false ambitions. Beware of the sin of vain ambition; only wrong and unhappiness can come of that. No, no; don't draw your hand away. I have not finished. Let me look closer. There is much written here that you should know and none but my wise old eyes can read, pretty."

Effrontery batted on indulgence.

"The past has been unfortunate. The present is bright with misleading glamour—beware of the vanities of the flesh! The future—I see a shadow. It is dark. It is difficult to read. I see a journey before you—a long journey; you will cross water and travel by the steam-cars. And there is a lover waiting for you at the journey's end—not here, but far away. I cannot see him clearly, but he waits. Perhaps later, when I consult my magic sphere of crystal. But wait!"

She breathed hard for a moment, perhaps appreciating her temerity; but she was as little capable of reading Sally's character as her palm.

"I see danger in your path," she resumed in accents of awe; "the shadow of something evil—and a window barred with iron. I cannot say what this means, but you should know. Look into your heart, my pretty; think. If perhaps you have done something you should not have done, and if you would not suffer shame for

it, you must make all haste to undo that which you have done—"

"Miss Pride!" Sally interrupted hotly, snatching her hand away. "You—"

"No, no. I have no name!" the other protested in the falsetto she had adopted to suit her impersonation; "I am only the wise old woman who tells the future and the past and reads the secrets—"

But the white anger that glowed in Sally's countenance abashed her. The shrill tones trailed off into a mumble. She looked uneasily aside.

"You must not be angry with the poor old wise woman," she stammered uncertainly.

"You know very well what you have said," Sally told her in a low voice vibrant with indignation. "You know very well you have deliberately insulted me—"

"No, no!"

"You know who I am and what your insinuation means, after what has happened here to-night. Miss Pride! Do you dare accuse me—"

"Oh, no—please!" Mercedes begged, aghast, quaking in realization of the enormity of her mistake. "I didn't think—I didn't know you—I didn't mean—"

"That," Sally cut in tensely, "is a deliberate falsehood. You inveigled me into this for the sole purpose of insulting me. Now I mean to have you repeat your accusation before witnesses. I shall inform Mrs. Gosnold—"

"Oh, no, Miss Manwaring! I beg of you, no! I didn't mean what you think, indeed I didn't!"

Sally made to speak, choked upon her indignation, and gulped.

"That's a lie!" she declared huskily, and, rising, fled the place.

She went a few hasty paces blindly, then, remembering she mustn't make an exhibition of herself, however great the provocation, checked her steps and went on at a less conspicuous and precipitate rate.

But still her vision was dark with tears of rage and mortification, and still her bosom heaved convulsively. Now and again she stumbled.

Twice since nightfall the abominable accusation had been flung into her face, the unthinkable thing imputed to her, and this last time out of sheer, gratuitous spleen, the jealous spite of a mean-minded old maid. For Miss Pride had no such excuse as Adele Standish had for thinking Sally

capable of infamy—unless, indeed, Mrs. Standish had proved false to her pledge and had told people. But no; she'd never do that; not, at least, while the settlement of her insurance claim remained in abeyance.

The brutality of it!

A strong hand closing unceremoniously on her wrist brought Sally to a standstill within two paces of the low stone wall that guarded the brink of the cliff.

"Look where you're going, Miss Man-waring!" Trego's voice counseled her quietly. Then, seeing that she yielded readily, he released her. "I beg your pardon," he said, "but in another minute if I hadn't taken the liberty of stopping you, you might have hurt yourself."

She managed to mutter an ungracious "Thank you."

"It's none of my business," Trego volunteered with some heat, "but I'd like to know what that vicious old vixen found to say to upset you this way!"

"Oh, you were watching?"

"No; I just happened to be sticking round when you flew out of that fool side-show of hers like you were possessed. And then I saw you weren't paying much attention where you were going, and I was afraid. Hope you don't mind my butting in!"

"Not at all," she gulped. "I suppose I ought to be grateful."

"That's just as you feel about it," he allowed reasonably.

She made an effort to collect herself. "But I am grateful," she asserted. "Please don't think I mean to be rude. Only," she gulped again, overcome by the stinging memory of that woman's insolence, "I'd almost as lief you hadn't stopped me—and that wall wasn't there!"

"Now, now!" he reminded her. "It can't be as bad as all that, you know."

"Well, but think how you would feel if you'd been accused twice of stealing Mrs. Gosnold's jewels last night!"

"Once would be plenty," he said gravely. "I don't reckon anybody would say that twice to my bare face!"

"Yes—but you can resent insults like a man!"

"That's right, too. But then it's the only way I know to resent 'em—with my fists. That's where you women put it all over us men; you know a hundred different ways of sinking the poisoned barb

subtly. I wouldn't like to be that Pride critter when you get through with her."

There was unquestionably a certain amount of comfort to be gained by viewing the case from this angle. Sally became calmer and brightened perceptibly.

"Perhaps," she murmured in an enigmatic manner becoming in the putative mistress of unutterable arts.

"It's just like that shriveled old shrew. What you might expect. If I had thought of it in time, I'd 've been willing to make a book on her laying it to you."

"But why—" Sally protested perplexedly.

"Sure, I don't have to tell you why," he said diplomatically. "You know as well as I do she's plumb corroded with jealousy of you for winning out with her dear Abigail just when she thought she had things fixed. I don't suppose you know the inside story of how your predecessor got the sack? The Pride person was responsible. Miss Matring was in her way, and a good deal of her own disposition to boot. It was a merry war, all right, while it lasted—scheming and squabbling and backbiting and tattling and corrupting servants to carry tales—all that sort of thing. To be honest about it, I don't just know which was the worse of the two; they didn't either of them stick at much of anything noticeable. But, of course, Miss Matring was handicapped, not being blood-kin, and the upshot was she had to go—and until you showed up the old maid was actually miserable for want of somebody to hate. I noticed the light of battle in those beady little eyes of hers the minute she laid 'em on you. I'd have warned you, only—"

He stumbled. She encouraged him. "Why didn't you?"

She didn't like Trego—that was understood—but sympathy was very sweet to her just then, whatever its source, and she had no real objection to disparagement of her slanderer, either.

"Well, it wasn't my fight. And I didn't know how you'd take interference. You looked pretty well able to take care of yourself—in fact, you are. And then—I don't reckon it's going to do me any good to say this; but I might as well make a clean breast of it—I was just selfish enough to have a sneaking sort of hope, deep down, that maybe you'd find it so unpleasant you'd quit."



"Mr. Trego!" No more than that; he had taken her breath away.

"I guess that does sound funny," he admitted, evading her indignant eye. "You can't trust me, ever. I always say things the wrong way; that's the best thing I do."

"If it's possible for you to explain—"

"It's possible, all right, but it's anything but easy. What I mean was—Well, any fool could see that as long as you were so strong for this society racket I didn't stand much show."

"Show!"

"Of making good with you. Oh, look here, what's the use of beating about the bush? I'm a rude, two-fisted animal, and that's all against me. I never could flummox up my meaning successfully with a lot of words like—well, name no names. All the same, it's pretty hard for a fellow who knows the girl he's sweet on isn't crazy about him to come right out in plain talk and say he loves her."

She was dumb. She stared incredulously at his heavy, sincere, embarrassed face, as if it were something abnormal, almost supernatural, a hallucination.

"Meaning," he faltered, "I mean to say—of course—I love you, Sar—er—ah—Miss Manwaring—and I think I can make you happy—"

He was making heavy weather of his simple declaration—laboring like an old-fashioned square-rigger in a beam sea.

"If you'll marry me, that is," he concluded in a breath, with obvious relief, if with a countenance oddly shadowed in the staring moonlight by the heat of his distress.

She tried, she meant to give him his answer without delay; it were kinder. But she found it impossible; the negative stuck stubbornly in her throat. She knew it would stab him deep. He wasn't the man to take love lightly; his emotions were anything but on the surface; their wounds would be slow to heal.

And in spite of the positive animus she had all along entertained toward him, she didn't want to hurt him now; perhaps not strangely, remembering that this proposal of marriage was a direct, downright protestation of implicit faith in her, uttered squarely on top of a most damnable indictment—remembering, too, that it was barely two hours since Sally herself had been ready, almost eager, to believe him capable of committing the very crime, of

implication in which he exonerated her without an instant's hesitation.

True, she had been quick to exonerate him in her thoughts as soon as the suspicion was engendered in them, but she had done so almost reluctantly, ungenerously, not because she wanted to believe him innocent, but because the burden of the evidence, together with the counsel of instinct, had been too strong in his favor to permit more than a moment's doubt. And she had repented; but that, it appeared, was not enough; she must be punished in this unique way, have her own unworthiness demonstrated by this artless manifestation of his worth. And however much she might long to make amends to him, she couldn't.

The pain and the pity of it! He was a far better man than she a woman, and he honored her with his love—and she couldn't requite him, she couldn't love him; he was still too far from the mirage of her ideal.

"Oh!" she sighed. "Why?"

He misconstrued. "I've told you heaps of times—because you're a woman, not a manikin. Marriage would mean something more to you than clothes, Europe, idleness, and flirting with other women's husbands, just as it would have to mean more to me than hiring a woman to live with me and entertain my friends."

"How do you know? How can you tell? What do you know about me?" she protested almost passionately, and answered herself. "You don't know; you can't tell; you know nothing about me. You assert things—I only wish they were true—"

"Oh, they're true enough," he interrupted unceremoniously. "It's no use trying to run yourself down to me. I couldn't feel the way I do about you if you were not at heart as sound as an apple, no matter what nonsense you may have been guilty of at one time or another, as every human being's got to be."

"Has nobody told you anything about me? Mrs. Gosnold—"

"Mrs. Gosnold tends her own knitting. And nobody has told me anything—except yourself. More than that, I don't go by other folk's opinions when I make up my mind about a matter as vital to me as marrying a wife."

"Then I must tell you—"

"Not until you give me some legitimate



title to your confidence. You've got no right to confide in me unless you mean to marry me—and you haven't said you would yet."

"I can't—I couldn't without telling you—please let me speak!" She drew a long breath of desperation and grasped the nettle firmly. "I stole the clothes I came here in. My name isn't Manwaring—it's Sally Manvers. I was a shop-girl—"

"Half a minute. Mrs. Gosnold knows all this, doesn't she?"

"Yes—"

"You told her everything, and still she stood for you?"

"Yes, but—"

"That's enough for me. I don't want to hear anything more until you're my wife. After that you'll have to tell me—and if there's any trouble remaining to be straightened out then, why, it'll be my natural job as a husband to fix it up for you. Till then I won't listen to any more of your confidences that have nothing whatever to do with the fact that I love you and believe in you and want to make you happy."

"But don't you understand that a girl who would steal and lie in order to get into society—"

"Oh, everybody's got to be foolish about something or other. You'll get over this social craze. The more you see of it the more sure your cure. Now don't mistake me; I'm not for an instant implying that some of the finest people that ever walked God's green earth don't figure in what we call Society, and there are more of them on this little island, perhaps, than anywhere else in America, and I'd be the last to cry them down or pretend I'm not glad and proud of their acquaintance and friendship. The trouble is, they can't in the nature of things keep up their social order without attracting a cloud of parasites, snobs, and toadies—and that's what makes me sick of the whole social game as practised to-day—"

"And you can't understand that I am precisely what you've described—a parasite—"

"You couldn't be if you wanted to. Maybe you think you could, but you're wrong; you haven't got it in you."

Against such infatuation candor was powerless. She retreated to the last ditch. "But you told me your father's heart was set on your marrying a society woman!"

"Well, what of that? You don't suppose I think any of them have got anything on you, do you? Besides, dad isn't altogether an old idiot, and if the kind of society woman he wants me to marry wouldn't look at me, and if my happiness is at stake— Well, even if he did want to ruin my life by hitching me up in double harness to a clothes-horse, I wouldn't let him!"

"But if I want—"

"There isn't anything you want that I can't secure for you. If you like this sort of thing, you shall have it. And don't run away with the idea that I'm not strong for society myself—the right sort."

Her gesture was hopeless. "What can I say to you?"

He suggested quietly, not without humor: "If you don't mind, say yes."

"You don't know what you're doing, making me such an offer. Suppose I marry you for your money—"

"You won't do that. You can't."

"What do you mean?"

"You've got to love me first. And you're too fine and honest to pretend that for the sake of my money."

Of a sudden his tone changed. "Oh, forgive me!" he pleaded. "I was a fool to ask. I might have known. I did know you didn't care for me. Only, I hoped, and I guess a man in love can't help letting his hopes make him foolish, especially when he sees the girl in trouble of some sort, needing what he can give her, love and protection—and when it's moonlight and there's music in the air!"

He checked himself with a lifted hand and stood for a moment, half smiling, as if made suddenly conscious of the pulsing rapture of those remote violins.

"That's what's made all the mischief," he complained, "that, and the way you look. It isn't a fair combination to work on a fellow, you know. Please don't say anything; you've said enough. I know very well what you mean, but I'd rather not hear it in one word of two letters—not to-night. I'm just foolish enough to prefer to go on hoping for a while, believing there was a bare chance I had misunderstood you."

He laughed half-heartedly, said "Good night" with an admirable air of accepting his dismissal as a matter of course, and marched off as abruptly as if reminded of an overdue appointment.

No other maneuver could have been more shrewdly calculated to advance his cause; nothing makes so compelling an appeal to feminine sympathies as a rejected suitor taking his punishment like a man; the emotional affinity of pity has been established ever since the invention of love.

Sally sank down mechanically upon a little marble seat near the spot where they had stood talking and stared without conscious vision out over the silvered sea.

Her thoughts were vastly unconcerned with the mysterious behavior of Mrs. Standish and her brother, the inexplicable insolence of Mercedes Pride, the shattered bubble of her affair with Donald Lyttleton, the kindness of Mrs. Gosnold, or the riddle of the vanished jewelry.

Now and again people passed her and gave her curious glances. She paid them no heed. The fact that they went in pairs, male and female, after their kind, failed to reexcite envy in her bosom.

There is a deep contentment to be distilled from consciousness of the love of even an unwelcome lover.

She thought no longer unkindly, but rather pitifully of poor, tactless, roughshod Mr. Trego.

When at length she stirred and rose it was with a regretful sigh that, matters being as they were with her, she was unable to reward his devotion with something warmer than friendship only.

Friendship, of course, she could no longer deny the poor man.

## CHAPTER XV

### FALSE WITNESS

SALLY failed, however, fully to appreciate how long it was that she had rested there, moveless upon that secluded marble seat, spellbound in the preoccupation of those thoughts, at once long and sweet with the comfort of a solaced self-esteem, for which she had to thank the author of her first proposal of marriage.

She rose and turned back to Gosnold House only on the prompting of instinct, vaguely conscious that the night had now turned its nadir and the time was drawing near when she must present herself first to her employer with the tale of last night's doings, then to Savage to learn his version of the happenings in New York.

But by the time she reminded herself

of these two matters she found that they had receded to a status of strangely diminished importance in her understanding. It was her duty, of course, a duty imposed upon her by her dependent position as much as by her affection for the lady, to tell Mrs. Gosnold all she knew without any reservation whatever; and it was equally her duty to herself, as a matter of common self-protection, to hear what Savage professed such anxiety to impart to her. And, not quite definitely realizing that it was Mr. Trego's passion which overshadowed both of these businesses, she wondered mildly at this unconcern with either. Somehow she would gladly have sealed both lips and ears to them and gone on basking uninterruptedly in the warmth of her sudden self-complacence.

By no means the least remarkable property of the common phenomenon of love is the satisfaction which it never fails to kindle in the bosom of its object, regardless of its source. In a world where love is far more general than aversion, wherein the most hateful and hideous is frequently the most beloved, it remains true that even a king will strut with added arrogance because of the ardent glance of a serving-wench.

And so, failing to realize her tardiness, it was not unnatural that Sally, entering the house by that historic side door and ascending the staircase that led directly to her bedchamber, should think to stop a moment and consult her mirror for confirmation of Mr. Trego's implicit compliments.

As one result of this action, instigated in the first instance less by vanity than by desire to avoid the crowds at the main entrances, Sally uncovered another facet of mystery.

On entering, she left the side door heedlessly ajar, and there was enough air astir to shut it with a bang as she turned up the staircase. Two seconds later that bang was echoed by a door above, and a quick patter of light footfalls followed. But by the time Sally gained the landing there was no one visible in the length of the corridor from end to end of that wing.

Now the door of the room opposite her was wide open on a dark interior. And the room adjoining was untenanted, as she knew. It seemed impossible that the second slam could have been caused by

any door other than that of her own bedchamber. Yet why should any one have trespassed there but one of the housemaids? And if the trespasser had been a housemaid, why that sudden and furtive flight and swift disappearance from the corridor?

Her speculations on this point were both indefinite and short-lived. She thought her hearing must have deceived her; a hasty look round the room discovered nothing superficially out of place, and the little gilt clock on her dressing-table told her that she was already seven minutes behind time. She delayed only for one hasty survey of the flushed face with star-bright eyes that the mirror revealed, and then with an inarticulate reflection that, after all, one could hardly blame Mr. Trego very severely, Sally caught up her long, dark cloak and made off down the corridor, past the head of the main staircase, and to the door of Mrs. Gosnold's boudoir.

A voice sharp with vexation answered her knock; she entered to find its owner fuming, and not only that, but surprisingly *en déshabillé*. The dress of Queen Elizabeth was gone, and Mrs. Gosnold stood on the threshold of her bedchamber clothed simply in undergarments and impatience.

"Why are you so late?" she demanded. "I was beginning to be afraid— But thank Heaven you're here! You very nearly spoiled everything, but there's still time. Come in."

She led the way into her bedchamber, and without acknowledging Sally's murmur of startled apology, waved an impetuous hand at her.

"Quick!" she demanded. "Get out of that costume at once!"

Her maid was already at Sally's side, fumbling with pins and hooks, before the girl recovered from her astonishment sufficiently to seek enlightenment.

"But what's the matter? What have I done? What—"

"Nothing much—merely almost upset the apple-cart for me!" Mrs. Gosnold laughed in grim humor, her own fingers busily aiding the maid's. "Come, step out of that skirt, please. If you'd been two minutes later—I'm simply going to pretend I'm you for ten minutes or so," she explained, lowering the shimmering gray Quaker skirt over her own shoulders. "I'm going to meet Walter Savage in your stead."

"But—"

"But me no buts. I heard enough there at the window, before you came on the scene, to make me very suspicious of that young rascal, even more so than I had every right to be from what you had told me. Now I mean to learn the rest, find out precisely what shenanigan he's up to; no good, I warrant, or he wouldn't be so ridiculously cautious about it."

"He only wants to tell me—"

"There's nothing he can possibly have to say to you that he couldn't have said a hundred times to-night in as many corners of the house and grounds without a soul hearing a word or thinking it odd that two young people should be exchanging confidences—and both of you masked into the bargain."

Sally, now entirely divested of her masquerade, resignedly shrugged herself into the black silk cloak for lack of one of her own negligees.

"I don't understand what you can suspect," she said dubiously.

"I don't suspect anything; but I'm going to find out everything."

"But aren't you afraid—"

"Of what, pray?" Mrs. Gosnold demanded with appropriate asperity.

"I mean, don't you think he'll know?"

"Nothing in the shadow of those trees, with my mask and that cape to disguise the fact that I'm a bit more matronly than yourself—worse luck!"

"But your voice—"

"Haven't you ever read about 'guarded accents' in novels? Those will be mine, precisely, when I talk to my graceless nephew. I sha'n't speak once above a whisper—and I defy any man to tell my whisper from yours or any other woman's for that matter. Don't flatter yourself, my dear; I shall fool him perfectly; there's precious little to choose between any two women in the dark!"

Already she was almost finished dressing, and as yet Sally hadn't had a chance to breathe a word about her own information.

"But there's something I must tell you," she insisted, suddenly reminded.

"About what?"

"Last night—things that happened after everybody had gone to bed. You know I was restless. I saw several things I haven't told you about. You ought to know. They may clear up the mystery of the theft."

"I already know all about that," Mrs. Gosnold declared calmly.

"About Mr. Lyttleton and the boat and the signals—"

Mrs. Gosnold turned sharply from her mirror. "What's this? Why didn't you tell me before?"

"I didn't know about the robbery, and I thought it was none of my affair—"

"It doesn't matter." Mrs. Gosnold caught up her cloak and threw it to the maid to adjust on her shoulders. "Whatever you saw had nothing to do with the robbery. Don Lyttleton's a bad lot in more ways than one, but he didn't steal my jewels last night—that I know."

"But who did?"

"I hope you may never find out."

"You know, then—"

"Positively." The lady adjusted her mask and caught her cloak about her. "Wait here till I come back. Then you must tell me about Don Lyttleton and the boat and the signals. I'll be as quick as I can."

She darted hurriedly out into the corridor and drew the door to.

The wonder excited by Mrs. Gosnold's declaration that she knew the identity of the thief—even though, the girl told herself, she had all along suspected as much—kept Sally quiet for the next several minutes. She was sorely tempted to question the maid, but one look at that quiet, impassive countenance assured her that this would be wasted breath.

Insensibly the tempo of a haunting waltz that sang clear in the night beyond the open windows wove itself into the texture of Sally's thoughts and set her blood tingling in response.

She recalled Trego with a recurrent glow of gratification.

Poor fellow!

One foot began to tap the floor in time to the music. She hadn't danced once that night, had purposely avoided every chance of an invitation to dance. And now, of a sudden, she wanted to, without reason or excuse.

It was very curious. She wondered at herself. What had worked this change? Was it really nothing more nor less than a declaration of love on the part of a man she—didn't altogether like?

Though, of course, she hadn't ever been quite fair to him. He had admirable qualities. His honesty. His scorn of pre-

tense and subterfuge. His simple faith in Sally Manvers, however misplaced.

If he were to beg a dance when Mrs. Gosnold had returned and Sally, recostumed, had rejoined the maskers, she hardly knew how she could in decency refuse him now.

The clock on the mantelpiece struck a single stroke. Sally started and looked up, to meet Marie's questioning glance.

"One o'clock?"

"Yes, Miss Manwaring."

"Then—why, she's been gone over fifteen minutes."

"Yes, miss."

What *could* Savage have found to say to Sally that her substitute need be delayed so long to hear it?

Sally frowned.

At the end of another five minutes the maid volunteered uneasily. "It's very odd. Mrs. Gosnold didn't expect to be away more than five or ten minutes, I know. She said as much before you came in."

Sally got up and went to a window which overlooked the driveway and lawn. Parting the curtains, she glanced out. The lawn was fair with moonlight, the driveway silver-blue, the woods behind dark and still. There was a closed car waiting at one side of the *porte-cochère*. The others—all those belonging to Gosnold House, as well as those of guests for the fête—were hidden among the trees bordering the road or parked in the open spaces around the garage and stables at a considerable remove from the house.

There was no one to be seen on the lawn or drive, no hurrying figure cloaked in Quaker gray.

After some minutes of fruitless watching Sally ventured doubtfully: "What time is it?"

"Ten past one, miss."

"Nearly half an hour—"

"Yes, miss."

"Do you think Mrs. Gosnold would mind if you went to make sure she was all right?"

"I don't know, Miss Manwaring. She doesn't like interference, if I may make so bold as to say so."

A little later, however, the woman added tentatively: "I wouldn't care to take the responsibility, myself, of going to see."

"But if I order you to go—"

"Yes, miss," Marie smiled.



"Then I do order you to go. But don't be long."

"No, miss."

Sally waited in a mood of constantly increasing anxiety. It was absurd to think that anything untoward could have happened to Mrs. Gosnold on her own grounds, meeting her own nephew for a clandestine talk. And, of course, she might have learned something from Savage which had induced her, for her own ends, to maintain her masquerade for a longer time. She was quite possibly somewhere on the terrace or in the formal garden.

Marie was back within five minutes, wearing an apprehensive countenance.

"There's nobody out back, miss, near the road, where she said she was to meet Mr. Savage, and I asked Thomas and some of the waiters, and they all said they hadn't seen her."

"But in my costume and masked—"

"It's past one, miss, already, and everybody has unmasked."

"To be sure. I'm going to my room and get into another dress. Then I'll look round for her myself."

"If you'll be so kind, miss—without letting on—"

"Of course."

"Mrs. Gosnold would be very indignant if any mistake was made."

Sally caught her cloak tightly about her, and because of its unconventionality as a costume, resumed her mask against the chance of meeting anybody in her passage through the corridor to the far wing of the building.

She fairly ran in her impatience, and through this haste was brought to the head of the main staircase at the precise moment when an unmasked Harlequin was about to set foot upon the upper landing.

Mr. Savage was smiling quietly to himself and slapping his calves lightly with his lath-sword; nothing in his manner excused the suspicion that he was not perfectly satisfied with himself and all his circumstances.

Somewhat reassured by the vision of this amiable countenance, Sally paused, and won a glance of quizzical inquiry, with especial application to the mask which she still wore in defiance of the rule.

But when she spoke in her natural voice that look was erased from the features of Mr. Savage as chalk-marks may be erased from a blackboard.

"Oh, Mr. Savage, if you please—"

"Wha-at!" the man ejaculated blankly, stopping short and dropping his make-believe weapon.

"I'm looking for Mrs. Gosnold. Have you seen her anywhere about?"

"Mrs. Gos— Aunt Abby!" He choked and gasped. "But you—who are you?"

"I thought you must know my voice."

Sally removed her mask, and incontinently Savage fell back against the banister-rail and grasped it for support.

"Miss Manvers! But—what—how the devil did you get back here?"

"I haven't been out."

She pulled up on the verge of frank explanation; it was quite possible that Mrs. Gosnold might furiously resent betrayal of her stratagem. And yet Savage's look of pure fright only augmented Sally's solicitude for her employer.

"You haven't been out! But ten minutes ago—out there—behind the trees—"

She shook her head and tried to smile a superior sort of a smile. "It wasn't I who met you."

The man made a gesture of hopeless confusion, and she could not but remark his surprising loss of color. Suddenly he stepped to her side and seized her roughly by the arm.

"Then who was it?" he demanded furiously. "If it wasn't you—who then? Damn it, you'd better tell me—"

"Let go my arm!" she demanded with a flash of temper that was instantly respected. "If you must know," she went on, reckless at consequences, "it was your aunt who met and talked to you out there. Don't you understand? She borrowed my costume and went to meet you in my place."

"Oh, my God!"

Savage was now chalky pale. He seemed to strive to say more, but failed for the constriction of his throat. For another instant he stared incredulously, then, without a word of explanation or apology, he turned and flung himself headlong down the steps.

Before reaching the middle landing, however, he checked himself on the reflection that he must avoid attracting attention, and went on more slowly, if still with every symptom of nervous haste.

At the bottom he turned aside and was quickly lost in the crowd.

Unable to pursue, dressed as she was,



Sally went on to her room in a mood of dark perplexity.

Surely it would seem that Savage must have been engaged in some very damnable business indeed, and have given himself away irremediably to Mrs. Gosnold, thinking her Sally, to exhibit such unmitigated consternation on discovery of his error.

But what could it have been? Sally could imagine nothing in their admittedly singular relations which, being disclosed to the aunt, should so completely confound the nephew.

Mrs. Gosnold had suggested no insufferable resentment of the deception practised upon her when informed of it by Sally. And why, therefore, Mr. Savage should comfort himself as if the heavens had fallen on learning that he had betrayed himself unconsciously to his aunt, passed Sally's comprehension.

And the strange flavor of the affair alarmed her: first, Mrs. Gosnold's unexplained (but, after all, not inexplicable) failure to return to her room on time; then this panic of Savage's.

It was patently the girl's immediate business to find one or the other or both of them and make sure that nothing was radically wrong after all.

By happy chance her very prettiest evening frock didn't hook up the back; she was able to struggle into it not only without assistance, but within a very few minutes.

Then, scurrying back to Mrs. Gosnold's room, she read in the apprehensive eyes of the maid, even before this last could speak, the news that the mistress was still missing, and so, darting down-stairs, began industriously to quarter the house and grounds.

By this hour few signs were wanting that the festival was on its wane; already cars were arriving and departing, laden with the very youngest and the oldest people; there was perceptibly more room on the dancing-floor of the veranda, which was populated chiefly by the younger set; in the supper-room the more rowdy crowd hung on with numbers undiminished and enthusiasm unabated, if liberally dampened; about the grounds there was far less movement, far more lingering in sequestered nooks and shadows. Ecstatica, for one, had folded her tent, liberated her black cat to the life of a confirmed misogynist, and vanished into the shades of night.

But nowhere was any sign to be found of any one of those three whom Sally sought—Mrs. Gosnold or Savage or, failing these preferences, Mrs. Standish.

Now, when she had nearly completed one exhaustive round of the grounds, and she was wondering where next to turn, with neither warning nor expectation she came around one end of a screen of shrubbery and stopped just short of surprising another sentimental tableau, staged in the selfsame setting used for Mr. Trego's declaration and cast with a change of but one mummer.

And in the instant marked by recognition of that selfsame marble seat commanding that same view of silvered sea and bathed in the light of that same heartless moon, Sally seemed to hear the echo of her destiny's sardonic laughter.

The gentleman was Mr. Trego, the lady Mrs. Artemas; and they were ignorant of Sally's observation for the simple reason that Mr. Trego's back was toward her and the head of Mrs. Artemas was pillowed on his shoulder—her arms a white band around his neck.

And as if this were not enough, Sally's discovery of them anticipated by the barest moment the appearance of another couple around the farther end of the clump of shrubbery—two people who happened to be husband and wife and known to Sally as recent additions to the house-party.

These, too, stopped sharply and would have considerably withdrawn but for the fact that, standing as he did, Trego could not escape seeing them. He spoke a word, presumably, in the ear so near his lips. The woman swung away in a twinkling, breaking from his arms, but retaining hold of one of his hands, and faced the two with a little excited laugh that sounded almost hysterical, and Sally noted that her eyes were bright with tears—of happiness, of course.

"Oh!" she cried, laughing and confused, "is it you, Mrs. Warrenden? No, please don't run. It's too late now—isn't it?—when you've caught us in the act! You and Mr. Warrenden will be the first to know of our happiness—"

Sally heard no more. The scene vanished from her vision as if the moonlight had been extinguished. It was some moments before she realized that she was running madly, as if hoping flight might help

her exorcise that ironic vision. But when she did realize what she was doing, she but ran the faster; let people think what they would; she no longer cared; their esteem no more mattered, for she was finished with them one and all—yes, even with Mrs. Gosnold!

Blindly instinct led her back to her room, again *via* that side door.

She flung tempestuously into its friendly darkness, locked herself in, and dropped, spent and racked, upon the edge of the bed, clenching her hands into two hard, tight fists, gritting her teeth, and fighting with all her strength to keep back the storm that threatened of sobs and tears and nervous laughter.

It wasn't as if she had really cared for the man—it was worse. It was the sum of all the blows her poor, struggling pride had suffered in the course of the last twenty-four hours, beginning with her awakening to the worthlessness of Lyttleton and realization of the low esteem in which he held her, and culminating in this facer from one whose love she had refused but none the less prized for the comfort it gave her.

Nor was this all. In addition to the writhings of an exacerbated vanity, she was conscious of a sense of personal loss, as if a landmark had been razed in the perspective of her life. In spite of those faults and shortcomings, so unduly emphasized through the man's own deliberate intent, and so inexcusable in one who appreciated so well what was expected of a man in his position, Sally had subconsciously from the very first felt Trego to be one whose faith and loyalty were as a rock, whose friendship might be counted upon as an enduring tower of refuge.

And to have him go from her, protesting passionate patience, leaving her exalted with the consciousness that she was wanted, to have him go thus from her and straightway fall into the trap which Mrs. Artemas unaffectedly baited—the trap of which he had not once but many times obliquely alluded to in half-humorous, half-genuine terms of fear—It was, it seemed to be, intolerable!

The waves of burning emotion that swept and scorched her were alternately of rage and chagrin.

Granted the opportunity, she could easily conceive herself as dealing very vigorously with the man-trap.

Some one rattled the knob of her door. Startled, Sally jumped up, and with her wadded handkerchief dabbed hastily and superfluously at her eyes, which were quite dry as yet.

She did not answer, but eyed apprehensively the dark recess in which the door was set at the end of the unlighted room.

A knock followed the noise of the knob. Still she hesitated to reply. Uncertainly she moved toward the nearest wall-sconce and lifted her hand to the switch. She was sadly confused and unstrung, her thoughts awl and nerves ajangle. The last thing she wished just then was to meet and talk to anybody.

Still it might be Mrs. Gosnold or her messenger. And that lady was Sally's one remaining friend on earth. She swallowed hard, took herself firmly in hand, and when the knock was repeated was able to answer in a tolerably even voice:

"Well? Who is it?"

"Miss Manwaring, are you there?" Heartfelt relief informed the voice of Mrs. Standish. "Please let me in. I must speak with you immediately."

Sullenly, without replying, Sally turned on the light, moved to the door, unlocked and opened it.

"Come in," she said ungraciously.

Mrs. Standish swept in, gay, crimson domino over fluffy skirts and slim, pink legs assorting oddly with the agitation betrayed by her unsmiling eyes, her pallor, which relieved the rouge on her cheeks, like rose-petals against snow.

"Thank God!" she whispered, "I've found you at last. I've looked everywhere for the last half-hour. This is the second time I've been here. You just got in, of course. Where *have* you been?"

"Does it matter?" Sally fenced, maintaining a stony countenance. "I mean, I don't think it does, now you've run me to earth at last. What's the trouble?"

"You haven't seen Walter? He hasn't told you?"

"No; I tried to speak to him half an hour ago, but he ran from me as if I were a ghost!"

"You know why!" The woman's voice trembled with restrained rage. "You impossible girl! why, *why* did you let Aunt Abby go to meet him instead of you? It was fatal, it was criminal. Of course, he gave the whole show away to her, never

guessing. Now it's all up with us; we'll never be asked here again, and the chances are she'll cut us out of her will into the bargain. Why did you do it? Oh, I could shake you!"

"I know well you would if you could," Sally admitted calmly. "Only—better not try."

"But why—"

"Well, if you must know, Mrs. Gosnold overheard you three plotting together out there just before I came on the scene. She was at the window overhead, listening through the shutters. I don't know what you were talking about—she didn't tell me—but it was enough to make her insist on my giving her my costume so that she might go and hear the rest of it."

Mrs. Standish bit her lip. And her eyes shifted uneasily from Sally's face.

"You haven't seen her since—"

"No," Sally answered bluntly. "Have you?"

"No. Walter and I have both been looking for her as well as you. That's why he ran when he knew about this terrible mistake; he wanted to find her and set things straight if he could. But she"—the woman stumbled and her eyes shifted again—"she's gone and hidden herself—plotting our humiliation and punishment I dare say. I only wish I knew. Walter is still hunting everywhere for her. See here, I presume you understand you've got to go now?"

"Why?"

"For one good reason—if what has happened isn't enough to persuade you—because there will be a man here from New York by the first boat—seven o'clock tomorrow morning—with a warrant for the arrest of Sarah Manvers."

"Are you telling the truth, Mrs. Standish?"

"How dare you! No, I won't let you make me lose my temper with your insolence. The matter is too serious, and I've no wish to see you suffer, even if you have ruined everything for us. You must listen to me, Miss Manvers: be advised and go. I don't know what put them on your trail, what made them suspect you were here, but the burglar-insurance people had the warrant sworn out yesterday afternoon and started a man up by the evening boat. Walter got a telegram to that effect about ten o'clock. That's what he wanted to say to you—that, and to give

you some money and directions for getting away."

"But why should I leave?"

"Do you *want* to go to jail?"

"Not much. But I don't see why I need. You can easily explain that the things I left in the bath-room were left there with your knowledge at the time when you took pity on me with that 'letter of recommendation' you threatened me with this evening and gave me a change of clothing to travel in."

"It's too late. If we had explained it that way, to begin with, it would have been all right. But neither of us thought. And Walter bungled things frightfully in New York. Now if we come forward with any such story they'll think we're all in a conspiracy to defraud the company!"

"Oh!" Sally exclaimed abruptly, with an accent of enlightenment that discounted the older woman.

With an effort, recovering, she sought to distract the girl.

"Surely you must see now, you have got to go! There's a boat to the mainland at six thirty. If you catch that, you'll have three hours' start, for the detective won't be able to get off the island before half past nine. And you ought to be able to lose yourself in that time somehow. Hurry; I'll help you pack a satchel. You'd better wear that blue serge; everybody wears blue serge, so it's inconspicuous. And here's some money for traveling expenses."

Sally ignored the little fold of bills held out to her.

"I'm not going," she declared firmly.

"Are you mad?"

"I would be to go with the situation what it is here. Don't you see that, unless those jewels are returned to Mrs. Gosnold to-night—yes, I mean the jewels you were so ready to accuse me of stealing a little while ago; but you seem to have forgotten that now—"

"I wish you would," Mrs. Standish replied, schooling her voice to accents of dulcet entreaty. "I was beside myself with anxiety—"

"Wait. If I go before those jewels are recovered—disappear, as you want me to—it will be equivalent to a confession that I myself stole them. And suppose I did."

"What!"

"I say, suppose I did, for the sake of argument. What right have you to assume

that I didn't commit the theft? No more than you had to accuse me as you did. And until the theft is made good, what right have you to let me go and, possibly, get away with my loot? No!" Sally shook her head. "You're not logical, you're not honest with me. There's something behind all this. I'm not going to be made a scapegoat for you. I'm not going to run away now and hide simply to further your plans for swindling the burglar-insurance company. I'll see Mrs. Gosnold and advise with her before I stir a step!"

"Oh, you are insufferable!" Mrs. Standish cried. In a flash she lost control of her temper altogether. Her face grew ghastly with the pallor of her rage. And she trembled visibly.

But what else she might have said to the defiant girl was cut short by the sudden and unceremonious opening of the door to admit three persons.

The first and last of these were Mercedes Pride and Mr. Lyttleton. Between them entered a man unknown to Sally—a hard-featured citizen in very ordinary business clothing, cold of eye, uncompromising of manner.

Jubilation glowed in the witch's glance; anticipative relish of the flavor of triumph lent her voice a shriller note. She struck an attitude, singling out Sally with a denunciatory arm.

"There she is! That's the woman who calls herself Sara Manwaring. Now arrest her—make her confess what she's done with those jewels—pack her off to jail!"

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PLANT

THE very sharpness of the attack shocked Sally into such apparent calm as she might not have been able even to simulate had she been given more time to prepare herself.

After that first involuntary start of surprise and indignation she stood quite still, but with a defiant chin well elevated and her shoulders back, and if she had in her turn grown pale, it was less with fright than with the contained exasperation that lighted the fires in her eyes ranging from face to face of the four.

Lyttleton, she noticed, lingered uneasily near the door, hanging his head, avoiding her glance, almost frankly shamefaced.

The spinster posed herself with arms akimbo and smirked superciliously at the badgered girl, malicious spite agleam in her little black eyes.

Mrs. Standish had fallen back on the interruption and now half stood, half rested against the dressing-table, her passion of a moment ago sedulously dissembled. She arched an inquiring eyebrow and smiled an inscrutable smile, questioning the proceedings without altogether disapproving them.

Nearer Sally than any of these, the strange man confronted the girl squarely, appraising her with an unprejudiced gaze.

"If you please—" she appealed directly to him.

"Miss Manwaring, I believe?" he responded with a slight, semidiffident nod.

Silently Sally inclined her head.

"That's the name she gave when she came here, at least," Mercedes commented.

Sally addressed Lyttleton. "Please shut the door," she said quietly, and as he obliged her, looked back to the stranger.

"Mason's my name, miss," he went on, "operative from Webb's Private Investigation Agency, Boston. Mrs. Gosnold sent for me by long-distance telephone this morning. I've been here all evening, working up this case on the *Claret*. The understanding was that I wasn't to take any steps without her permission, but she left it to me to use my best judgment in case her little plan for getting a confession didn't work. So I thought I'd better not wait any longer, seeing how late it is and how long after the time limit she set—and all."

"Do I understand Mrs. Gosnold gave you permission to break into my room with—these people?" Sally demanded.

"No, miss—not exactly. As I say, she told me to use my best judgment in case the jewels weren't returned. And, as I've said, it was getting late, and Mrs. Gosnold nowhere to be found, and I thought I'd better get busy."

"Mrs. Gosnold has disappeared?"

"Well, you might call it that. Anyway, we can't seem to find any trace of her. I've got an idea that maid of hers knows something, but if she does she won't talk to me. And considering that, and everything—the circumstances being so unusual all around—it seemed to be up to me to take some steps to make sure nothing was wrong."



He faltered, patently embarrassed by a distasteful task.

"Well?" Sally insisted coolly. "Still you've given me no reason for this outrageous intrusion and accusation."

"No, miss; I'm coming to that. You see, the first thing was to get that letter-box opened and examine those envelopes. I got several of the gentlemen to act as a sort of a committee, so as nobody could kick on the ground that everything wasn't done open and aboveboard."

"You found no confession, I gather?" Mrs. Standish interpolated.

"No, ma'am—no confession. All but two of the cards were blank. The two had something written on them—anonym information, so to speak. I brought them along so that Miss Manwaring would understand, in case there was any mistake, it wasn't my fault."

He fumbled in a pocket, brought forth the cards, and with some hesitation handed them over to Sally.

Both bore messages laboriously printed in pencil, of much the same tenor:

*"Suggest you look into Miss Manwaring's antecedents—also her actions between one and three o'clock last night."*

*"Ask Miss Manwaring what she was doing out of bed after one last night—search of her room might prove helpful."*

Silently Sally returned the cards.

"You see," the detective apologized heavily, "after that, there wasn't anything for it but to ask you to explain."

"There is nothing to explain; the charge is preposterous."

"Yes, miss—that is, I hope so, for your sake. All the same, I had to ask you. Most of the gentlemen present when I opened the envelopes seemed to think I ought to do something at once. Personally, I'd rather have consulted Mrs. Gosnold before putting it up to you this way—"

"I'm afraid you will find that would have been wiser."

"Yes, miss, perhaps. But she being absent and no way of finding out when she was liable to be back, and the case left in my hands, to act on my discretion, providing no confession was made—"

"Still, I advise you to wait. If you think you must do something, why not employ your talents to find Mrs. Gosnold?"

"Well—that's so, too, and I would, only it was suggested that maybe she hadn't

disappeared really, but was just keeping out of sight until this business was settled, preferring not to be around when anything unpleasant was pulled off. Like this."

Sally shrugged.

"Very well," she said indifferently. "What then?"

"I'd like to ask you some questions."

"Spare yourself the trouble. I sha'n't answer."

"You might make things easier for all of us, miss, yourself included—"

"I promise faithfully," Sally said, "to answer any questions you may care to ask, fully, freely, truthfully—in the presence of Mrs. Gosnold. Find her first. Until you do, I refuse to say a word."

"I don't suppose you'd mind telling me how you came to get your job as secretary to Mrs. Gosnold."

True to her word, Sally kept her lips tight shut.

At this, Miss Pride felt called upon to volunteer: "Mrs. Standish ought to be able to tell you that, Mr. Mason. She brought Miss—Manwaring here."

"I'm sure," Mrs. Standish said with an elaborate air of indifference, "I know little or nothing about Miss Manwaring." But Sally's regard was ominous. She hesitated, apparently revising what she had at first intended to say. "She came to me last week—the day we left New York—with a letter of recommendation purporting to be from Mrs. English—Mrs. Cornwallis English, the social worker, who is now in Italy."

"Purporting?" iterated the detective.

"Oh, I have no reason to believe it wasn't genuine, I'm sure."

"Have you the letter handy?"

"I don't think I have," Mrs. Standish replied dubiously. "Perhaps. I can't say. I'll have to look. I'm careless about such matters."

"That's all you know about her?"

"Practically. She seemed pleasant-spoken and intelligent. I took a fancy to her, loaned her an outfit of clothing, brought her here, and introduced her to my aunt, who personally engaged her, understanding all the circumstances. That is the limit of my responsibility for Miss Manwaring."

Sally drew a deep breath; at all events, the woman had not dared repeat any of her former abominable accusations; if she was unfriendly, she was also committed to



a neutral attitude. No more talk of a forged letter, no more innuendo concerning Sally's "accomplice" of the night before.

There was a pause. The detective scratched his head in doubt.

"All this is very irregular," he deprecated vaguely.

Miss Pride opened her mouth to speak, but Lyttleton silenced her with a murmured word or two. She sniffed resentfully but held her peace.

"I can't accept your apology," Sally returned with dignity. "But I'm sure you have no longer any excuse for annoying me."

But Mr. Mason held his ground. "The trouble is," he insisted, "after those cards had been read, one of the gentlemen said he had seen you out in the garden between two and three o'clock."

"Mr. Lyttleton!" Sally accused with a lip of scorn.

"Why, yes," the detective admitted.

Mrs. Standish made a furious gesture, but contrived to refrain from speech.

"I suppose I shouldn't have mentioned it," Lyttleton said blandly, looking Sally straight in the face. "But the circumstances were peculiar, to say the least, if not incriminating. I saw this cloaked figure from my window. I thought its actions suspicious. I dressed hurriedly and ran down in time to intercept Miss Manwaring at an appointment with a strange man. I didn't see his face. He turned and ran. While I was questioning Miss Manwaring Mr. Trego came up and misconstrued the situation. We had a bit of a row, and before it was cleared up Miss Manwaring had escaped."

Sally's sole comment was an "Oh!" that quivered with its freight of loathing.

"Sorry," Lyttleton finished cheerfully; "but I felt I had to mention it. I dare say the matter was innocent enough, but still Miss Manwaring hasn't explained it, so far as I know; I felt it my duty to speak."

To the inquiring attitude of the detective Sally responded simply: "Find Mrs. Gosnold."

"Yes, miss," he returned with the obstinacy of a slow-witted man. "Meanwhile, I guess you won't mind my looking round a bit, will you?"

"Looking round?"

"Your room, miss."

Sally gasped. "You have the insolence to suggest searching my room?"

"Well, miss—"

"I forbid you positively to do anything of the sort without Mrs. Gosnold's permission."

"There!" Miss Pride interpolated in accents of acid satisfaction. "If she has nothing to fear, why should she object?"

"Do be quiet, Mercedes," Mrs. Standish advised sweetly. "Miss Manwaring is quite right to object, even if innocent."

"You see, miss," Mason persisted, "I have Mrs. Gosnold's authority to make such investigation as I see fit."

"I forbid you to touch anything in this room."

"I'm sorry. I'd rather not. But it looks to me like my duty."

She perceived at length that he was stubbornly bent on this outrageous thing. For a breath she contemplated dashing madly from the place, seeking Trego, and demanding his protection.

But immediately, with a sharp pang, she was reminded that she might no longer depend even on Trego.

As the detective tentatively approached her dressing-table the girl swung a wicker armchair about so that it faced a corner of the room and threw herself angrily into it, her back to the four.

Immediately, as if nothing but her eye had prevented it theretofore, the search was instituted.

She heard drawers opened and closed, sounds of rummaging. She trembled violently with impotent exasperation. It was intolerable, yet it must be endured. There was one satisfaction: they would find nothing, and presently Mrs. Gosnold would reappear and their insolence be properly punished.

She could not believe that Mrs. Gosnold would let it pass unbuked. And yet—

Of a sudden it was borne in upon the girl that she had found this little island world a heartless, selfish place, that she had yet to meet one of its inhabitants by whom her faith and affection had not been betrayed, deceived, and despised.

Remembering this, dared she count upon even Mrs. Gosnold in this hour of greatest need?

Had that lady not, indeed, already failed her protégée by indulging in the whim of this unaccountable disappearance?

Must one believe what had been suggest-

ed, that she, believing her confidence misplaced in Sally, was merely keeping out of the way until the unhappy business had been accomplished and the putative cause of it all had been removed from Gosnold House?

Behind her back the futile business of searching her room, so inevitably predestined to failure and confusion, was being vigorously prosecuted, to judge by the sounds that marked its progress. And from the shifting play of shadows along the wall she had every reason to believe that Miss Pride was lending the detective a willing hand. If so, it was well in character; nothing could be more consistent with the spinster's disposition than this eagerness to believe the worst of the woman she chose to consider her rival in the affections of Mrs. Gosnold. A pitiful, impotent, jealousy-bitten creature, Sally was almost sorry for her, picturing the abashment of the woman when her hopes proved fruitless, her fawning overtures toward forgiveness and reconciliation. Possibly she had been one of the two to accuse Sally on the cards.

The other? Not Mrs. Standish. She would hardly direct suspicion against the girl she despised when by so doing she would imperil her own schemes. She was too keenly selfish to cut off her nose to spite her face. Sally could imagine Mrs. Standish all this while as remaining conspicuously aloof, overseeing the search with her habitual manner of weary toleration, but inwardly more than a little tremulous with fear lest the detective or Mercedes chance upon that jewel-case and so upset her claim against the burglar-insurance concern.

Lyttleton, too, would in all likelihood be standing aside, posing with a nonchalant shoulder against the wall, his slender, nicely manicured fingers stroking his scrubby mustache (now that he had discarded the beard of Sir Francis, together with his mask) and not quite hiding the smirk of his contemptible satisfaction—the satisfaction of one who had lied needlessly, meanly, out of sheer spite, and successfully, since his lie, being manufactured out of whole cloth, could never be controverted save by the worthless word of the woman libeled.

More than probably Lyttleton had been the other anonymous informant.

And whatever the outcome of this sick-

ening affair (Sally told herself with a shudder of disgust), she might thank her lucky stars for this blessing, that she had been spared the unspeakable ignominy of not finding Mr. Lyttleton out before it was too late.

Trego, too, though she could consider a little more compassionately the poor figure Trego cut, with his pretensions to sturdy common sense dissipated and exposing the sentimentalist so susceptible that he was unable to resist the blandishments of the first woman who chose to set her cap for him. Poor thing; he would suffer a punishment even beyond his deserts when Mrs. Artemas had consummated her purpose and bound him legally to her.

For all that, Sally felt constrained to admit, Trego had been in a measure right in his contention, though it had needed his folly to persuade her of his wisdom. She was out of her element here. And now she began to despair of ever learning to breathe with ease the rarefied atmosphere of the socially elect. The stifling midsummer air that stagnated in Huckster's Bargain Basement was preferable, heavy though it was with the smell of those to whom soap is a luxury, and frequently a luxury uncoveted; there, at least, sincerity and charity did not suffocate, and there humbler virtues flourished.

Bitterly Sally begrudged the concession that she had been wrong. All along she had nourished her ambition for the society of her betters on the conviction that, with all her virtues, she was as good as anybody. To find that with all her faults she was better, struck a cruel blow at her pride.

A low whistle interrupted at once her morose reflections and the mute activity of the search.

Immediately she heard the detective exclaim: "What's this?"

Miss Pride uttered a shrill cry of satisfaction.

Mrs. Standish said sharply: "Aunt Abby's solitaire!"

To this chorus Mr. Lyttleton added a drawl: "Well, I'm damned!"

Unable longer to contain her alarm and curiosity, Sally sprang from her chair and confronted four accusing countenances.

"What do you know about this?" the detective demanded.

Clipped between his thumb and forefinger a huge diamond coruscated in the light of the electrics.

Momentarily the earth quaked beneath Sally's feet.

Her eyes were fixed on the ring and blank with terror; her mouth dropped witlessly ajar; there was no more color in her face than in this paper, never a countenance spelled guilt more damningly than hers.

"Yes!" Miss Pride chimed in triumphantly. "What have you to say to this, young woman?"

Sally heard, as if remotely, her own voice ask hoarsely: "What—what is it?"

"A diamond ring," Mason responded obviously.

"Aunt Abby's," Mrs. Standish repeated. Mason glanced at her. "You recognize it?"

She nodded.

"Where did you find the thing?" Sally demanded.

"Rolled up inside this pair of stockings," Mason indicated the limp, black silk affairs which he had taken from a dresser-drawer. "Well, how about it?"

"I don't know anything about it. I tell you I never saw it before."

The detective grinned incredulously. "Not even on Mrs. Gosnold's finger?"

"No—never anywhere."

"Mrs. Gosnold seldom wears the ring," Mrs. Standish put in; "but it is none the less hers."

"Well, where's the rest of the stuff?" Mason insisted.

"I don't know. I tell you, I know nothing about that ring. I have no idea how it got where you found it. Somebody must have put it there." Sally caught her distracted head between her hands and tried her best to compose herself. But it was useless; the evidence was too frightfully clear against her; hysteria threatened.

"Mrs. Standish gave me the stockings," she stammered wildly, "rolled up as you found them. Ask her."

"Oh, come, Miss Manwaring; you go too far!" Mrs. Standish told her coldly. "If you are possibly innocent, compose yourself and prove it. If you are guilty, you may as well confess and not strain our patience any longer. But don't try to drag me into the affair; I won't have it."

"I guess there isn't much question of innocence or guilt," Mason commented. "Here's evidence enough. It only remains to locate the rest of the loot. It'll be easier for you," he addressed Sally directly,

"if you own up—come through with a straight story and save Mrs. Gosnold trouble and expense."

He paused encouragingly, but Sally shook her head.

"I can't tell you anything," she protested. "I don't know anything. It's some horrible mistake. Or else—it's a plant to throw suspicion on me and divert it from the real thief."

"Plant?" Miss Pride queried with a specious air of bewilderment.

"Thieves' jargon—manufactured evidence," Lyttleton explained.

"Ah, yes," said the old maid with a nod of satisfaction.

"If it's a plant, it's up to you to show us," Mason came back. "If it isn't, you may as well lead us to the rest of it quick."

"You've looked everywhere, I presume?" Lyttleton inquired casually.

"Everywhere I can think of in this room and the bath-room," the detective averred; "and I'm a pretty good little looker. That's my business, of course. I'm willing to swear there's no more jewelry concealed anywhere hereabouts."

"Unless, perhaps, she's got it on her person."

"That might be, of course," Mason allowed, eying the girl critically. "But somehow I don't think so. If she had, why would she have left this one piece buried here? No; you'll find she's hidden the rest of the stuff somewhere—about the house or grounds, maybe—or passed it on to a confederate—the guy you saw her talking to last night, as like as not—and held out this ring to make sure of her bit when it comes to a split-up."

"Still," Lyttleton persisted, "ought you to take any chances?"

"Well—" The detective shuffled with embarrassment. "Of course," he said with brilliant inspiration, "if these ladies will undertake the job—"

Miss Pride stirred smartly. "It's not what I want to do," she insisted, "but if you insist—and on dear Abigail's account—"

With a tremendous effort Sally whipped her faculties together and temporarily reasserted the normal outward aspect of her forceful self.

"I will not be searched," she said with determination. "With Mrs. Gosnold present—yes, anything. Find her, and I'll submit to any indignity you can think of."

But if Mrs. Standish and Miss Pride think I will permit them to search me in her absence—"

She laughed shortly. "They'd better not try it—that's all!" and on this vague threat turned away and threw herself back into the chair.

"I'm sure," Miss Pride agreed, "I'd much rather not, for my part. And dear Abigail is so peculiar. Perhaps it would be best to wait till she gets back."

"Or hunt her up," Lyttleton amended.

"I guess you're right," Mason agreed, a trace dubiously.

"But what will you do with the girl in the mean time? Take her to jail?"

"No; I guess not yet—not until we see what Mrs. Gosnold thinks, anyway. She ought to be safe enough here. That door locks; we'll take the key. She can't get out of the window without risking her neck—and if she did make a getaway uninjured, she can't leave the island before morning. Let's move along, as you say, and see if we can't find Mrs. Gosnold."

Skirts rustled behind Sally's sullen back and feet shuffled. Then the door closed softly and she heard the key rattle in the lock.

She sat moveless, stunned, aghast.

Strangely, she did not weep; her spirit was bruised beyond the consolation of tears.

The wall upon which her vacant vision focused was not more blank and white than her despair was blank and black. She was utterly bereft of hope; no ray penetrated that bleak darkness circumscribing her understanding.

Now the last frail prop had been knocked from under her precarious foothold in the faith and favor of Mrs. Gosnold.

As to the identity of the enemy who had done this thing Sally entertained not a shadow of doubt, though lacking this proof she could not have believed she owned one so vindictive, ruthless, and fiendishly ingenious.

But after what had happened it seemed most indisputable that Lyttleton, not content with avenging his overnight discomfiture by his unscrupulous lie, had deliberately plotted and planted this additional false evidence against the girl to the end that she might beat out her life against the stone walls of a penitentiary.

For who would not believe his word

against hers? Lyttleton had stolen the jewels; what else had he carried so stealthily down to the beach? What else had those signals meant but that they had been left there in a prearranged spot? For what else had the boat put in from the yacht to the beach? As for the window of the signals, it might well have been Lyttleton's, which adjoined the row of three which Sally had settled upon; and she had delayed so long after seeing him disappear on the beach that he must have had ample time to return to his room, flash the signals, and come out again to trap the one he knew had been watching him.

And if he hadn't stolen the jewels, what else was that "private matter" he had been so anxious to keep quiet that he was willing to purchase Sally's silence even at the cost of making love to her? And if not he, who had been the thief whose identity Mrs. Gosnold was so anxious to conceal that she had invented her silly scheme for extracting an anonymous confession?—her statement to the contrary notwithstanding that Lyttleton had not stolen the jewels and that she knew positively who had! The man was a favorite of Mrs. Gosnold's; she had proved it too often by open indulgence of his nonsense. He amused her. And it seemed that in this *milieu* the virtue of being amusing outweighed all vices.

Why else had Mrs. Gosnold refused to listen to the story Sally was so anxious to tell her about her precious Don Lyttleton? She must have known, then, that Sally was under suspicion. Miss Pride had known it, or she would not have found the courage to accuse the girl under the guise of fortune-telling, and what Mercedes knew her dear Abigail unflinchingly was made a party to. And knowing all this, still she had sought to protect the man at the girl's expense.

And all the while pretending to like the latter!

Now, doubtless, the truth of the matter would never come out.

In panic terror Sally envisaged the barred window of the spinster's prophecy. To this, then, had discontent with her lowly lot in life brought her, to the threshold of a felon's cell.

Surely she was well paid out for her foolishness.

After some time she found that she had left her chair and was ranging wildly to



and fro between the door and window. She halted, and the mirror of her dressing-table mocked her with the counterfeit presentment of herself, pallid and distraught in the petty prettiness of her borrowed finery.

In a sudden seizure of passion she fairly tore the frock from her body, wrecking it beyond repair.

Then, calmed somewhat by reaction from this transport, she reflected that presently they would be coming to drag her off to jail, and she must be dressed and ready.

Turning to her wardrobe, she selected its soberest garments—the blue serge tailored suit advised by Mrs. Standish—and donned them.

This done, she packed a hand-bag with a few necessities, sat down, and waited.

The minutes of that vigil dragged like hours. She began to realize that it was growing very late. The guests of the fête had all departed. The music had long since been silenced. Looking from her window, she saw the terrace and gardens cold and empty in the moonlight.

And at this sight temptation to folly assailed her and the counsel of despair prevailed.

There was none to prevent the attempt—and the drop from the window-sill to the turf was not more than twelve feet. She risked, it was true, a sprained ankle, but she ran a chance of escaping. And even if she had to limp down to the beach, there were boats to be found there—rowboats drawn up on the sand—and there was the bare possibility that she might be able to row across the strait to the mainland before her flight was discovered.

And even if overtaken, she could be no worse off than she was. Every one believed her guilty; there was no way for her to prove her innocence.

She might better chance the adventure.

On frantic impulse, without giving herself time to weigh the dangers, Sally switched off her light, sat down on the window-sill, swung her legs over, and let herself down until she hung by the grip of both hands upon the sill.

And then she repented. She was of a sudden terribly afraid. Remembering too late the high heels of her slippers, she discounted the certainty of a turned ankle—which would hurt frightfully even if it failed to incapacitate her totally. For the

life of her she could not release her grasp, though already the drag of her weight was beginning to cause a most perceptible ache in the muscles of her arms.

She panted with fright—and caught her breath on a sob to hear herself called softly from below.

"Miss Manwaring! For the love of Mike—"

Trego!

She looked down and confirmed recognition of his voice with the sight of his upturned face of amazement. He stood almost immediately beneath her. Heaven—or the hell that brewed her misadventures—alone knew where he had come from so inopportunistically. Still, there he was.

"What are you doing? What's the matter?" he called again—and again softly, so that his voice did not carry far.

She wouldn't answer. For one thing, she couldn't think what to say. The explanation was at once obvious and unspeakably foolish of her.

Her hands were slipping. She gritted her teeth and kicked convulsively, but decorously, seeking a foothold on the smooth face of the wall that wasn't there.

At this his tone changed. He understood what was happening. He came more nearly under and planted himself with wide-spread feet and outstretched arms.

"You can't hold on there any longer," he insisted. "Let go. Drop. I'll catch you."

Only the mortification of that prospect nerved her aching fingers to retain their grip as long as they did—which, however, was not overlong.

She felt herself slipping, remembered that she mustn't scream, whatever happened, experienced an instant of shuddering suspense, then an instantaneous eternity wherein, paradoxically, part of her seemed still to be clinging to the window-ledge while most of her was spinning giddily down through a bottomless pit, saw the grinning moon reel dizzily in the blue vault of heaven—and with a little shock landed squarely in the arms of Mr. Trego.

He staggered to some extent, for she was a solidly constructed young person, but recovered cleverly—and had the impudence to seem amused. Sally's first impression on regaining grasp of her wits was of his smiling face, bent over hers, of a low chuckle, and then, to her complete stupefaction, that she was being kissed.



He went about that business, having committed himself to it, in a most business-like fashion; he kissed (as he would have said) for keeps, kissed her lips hungrily, ardently, and most thoroughly; he had been wanting to for a long time, and now that his time was come he made the most of it.

She was at first too stunned and shocked to resist. And for another moment a curious medley of emotions kept her inert in his arms, of which the most coherent was a lunatic notion that she, too, had been wanting just this to happen, just this way, for the longest time. And when at length she remembered and felt her anger mounting and was ready to struggle, he disappointingly set her down upon her feet.

"There!" he said with satisfaction. "Now that's settled—and a good job, too!"

She turned on him furiously.

"How dared you—"

"Didn't I deserve it, catching you the way I did?" he asked, opening his eyes in mock wonder at her. "And didn't you deserve it for being so silly as to try anything like that?" He jerked his head toward that window. "What on earth possessed you—"

"Don't you know? Don't you understand?" she stormed. "I've been accused of stealing Mrs. Gosnold's jewels—locked up. You knew that surely!"

"What an infernal outrage!" he cried indignantly. "No, I didn't know it. How would I? I"—he faltered—"I've been having troubles of my own."

That drove in like a knife-thrust the memory of the scene in the garden with Mrs. Artemas. The girl recoiled from him as from something indescribably loathsome.

"Oh!" she cried in disgust, "you are too contemptible!"

A third voice cut short his retort, a hail from above. "Hello, down there!"

With a start Sally looked up. Her window was alight again, and somebody was leaning head and shoulders out.

"Hello, I say! Is that the Manwaring woman? Stop her; she's escaping arrest!"

Trego barred the way to the gardens; and that was as well (she thought in a flash), for now the only hope for her was to lose herself temporarily in the shadows of the shrubbery.

The thought of the trees that stood between the grounds and the highway was

vaguely in her mind with its invitation to shelter when she turned and darted like a hunted rabbit around the corner of the house.

Before Trego regained sight of her she was on the landward lawns; crossing them like the shadow of a wind-spiced cloud, she darted into the obscurity of the trees and vanished. And Mr. Trego, observing Mr. Lyttleton emerge from under the *portecochère* and start in pursuit, paused long enough deftly to trip up that gentleman and send him sprawling with all the goodwill imaginable.

Frantic with fright, her being wholly obsessed with the one thought of escape, Sally flew on down the drive until, on the point of leaving the grounds by the gate to the highway, she pulled up perforce and jumped back in the nick of time to avoid disaster beneath the wheels of a motor-car that was swinging inward at a reckless pace.

Involuntarily she threw a forearm across her eyes to shield them from the blinding glare of the head-lamps. In spite of this she was recognized and heard Mrs. Gosnold's startled voice crying out: "Miss Manwaring! Stop! Stop, I say!"

With grinding brakes the car lurched to a sudden halt.

Weak, spent, and weary, the girl made no effort to consummate her escape, realizing that it had been a forlorn hope at best.

## CHAPTER XVII

### EXPOSÉ

SOME little time later there filed into the boudoir of the hostess of Gosnold House a small but select troupe of strangely various tempers.

Mrs. Gosnold herself led the way, a portentous countenance matching well her tread of inexorable purpose, but in odd contrast to the demure frivolity of the Quaker Girl costume she still wore.

Sally followed, nervously sullen of bearing toward all save her employer.

Mr. Walter Arden Savage came next, but at a respectful distance, a very hang-dog Harlequin indeed, a cigarette drooping disconsolately from the corner of his mouth.

At the door, he stood aside to give precedence to his sister, no longer Columbine, but a profoundly distressed and appre-

hensive blond person in a particularly fetching negligee.

Miss Pride alone wore her accustomed mien—of sprightly spinsterhood—unruffled.

Mr. Lyttleton was almost too much at ease; Mr. Mason was exceedingly dubious; Mr. Trego was, for him, almost abnormally grave.

This last, bringing up the rear of the procession, closed the hall door at a sign from Mrs. Gosnold. The company found seats conspicuously apart, with the exception of Mrs. Standish and Savage, likewise Mercedes, who stuck to her dear Abigail as per invariable custom. Sally, on her part, found an aloof corner where she could observe without being readily observed.

"So," said Mrs. Gosnold, taking her place beside the desk and raking the gathering with a forbidding eye. "Now, if you will all be good enough to humor me without interruption, I have some announcements to make, some news to impart, and perhaps a question or two to ask. It's late, and I'm tired and short of temper, so you needn't be afraid I sha'n't make the proceedings as brief as possible. But there are certain matters that must be settled before we go to bed to-night."

She managed a dramatic pause very effectively, and then: "I've been kidnapped," she announced.

Murmurs of astonishment rewarded her. She smiled grimly.

"Kidnaped," she iterated with a sort of ferocious relish. "At my age, too. I don't wonder you're surprised. I was. So were my kidnapers, when they found out who I was. For, of course, it was a mistake. They were conventional kidnapers, with not an ounce of originality to bless themselves with, so naturally they had meant to kidnap a good-looking youngster—Miss Manwaring, in fact."

She nodded vigorous affirmation of the statement. "So I'm told, at least; so Walter tells me; and he ought to know; he claims to have been the moving spirit in the affair. When he found out his mistake, of course, he posted off after me to rectify the hideous error, and arrived just in time to effect a dramatic rescue. And then he had to confess.

"The whole business," she went on, "from beginning to end, was very simple, childishly simple. In fact, ridiculous. And sickening. You're not going, Adele?"

she interrupted herself as Mrs. Standish rose.

Without answer her niece moved haughtily toward the door. Mrs. Gosnold nodded to Trego.

"Oh, yes, let her go. I'm sure I've no more use for her. But half a minute, Adele; the car will be ready to take you and Walter to the nine thirty boat tomorrow morning."

There was no answer. The door closed behind Mrs. Standish, and her aunt calmly continued:

"It seems that Adele's notorious extravagance got her into hot water shortly after she divorced Standish and had only her private means to support her insane passion for clothes and ostentation in general. She went to money-lenders—usurers, in fact. And, of course, that only made it worse. Then Walter, who has never been overscrupulous, conceived the brilliant notion of squaring everything up for a new start by swindling the burglar-insurance people. Adele has always carried heavy insurance on her jewelry—almost the only sensible habit she ever contracted. And so they conspired, like the two near-sighted idiots they were.

"On the afternoon of the day they were to start for the island they gave all the servants a night off, and contrived to miss connection with the Sound steamer. Then they went to the Biltmore for dinner, and when it was dark Walter sneaked back home to burglarize the safe. I understand he made a very amateurish job of it. Into the bargain, he was observed. It seems that the servants had carelessly left the scuttle open to the roof, and Miss Manwaring, caught there in a thunder-storm, had taken shelter in the house—which was quite the natural thing, and no blame to her. In addition, a real burglar presently jimmied his way in, caught Walter in the act of rifling his own safe, and forthwith assaulted him. Walter and the jewels were only saved by the intervention of Miss Manwaring, who very bravely pointed a pistol at the real burglar's head, and then, having aided Walter to turn the tables, ran away. So far, good; Walter booted the burglar out of the house, loaded up with the jewels, and left to rejoin Adele. But fate would have it that he should meet Miss Manwaring again in the Grand Central Station."

She paused for breath, then summed up

with an amused smile: "There was a most embarrassing *contretemps*: a broken desk and empty safe at home to be accounted for, whether or not they attempted to swindle the insurance company, and if they did make the attempt—and remember, they were desperate for money—a witness to be taken care of. They couldn't let Miss Manwaring go and tell the story of her adventure promiscuously, as she had every right to, if she chose, for if it got to the ears of the insurance people their plot would fail, and they were none too sure that they were not liable to be sent to jail for conspiracy with intent to defraud. So they cooked up a story to account for Miss Manwaring's acquaintance and brought her here, knowing that I had recently dismissed Miss Matring. And immediately, as was quite right and proper, everything began to go wrong.

"To begin with, the insurance people proved skeptical, largely through Walter's stupidity. It seems that certain evidences had been left in the house of Miss Manwaring's presence there with what we may call, I presume, Walter's permission, the fatal night. The servants who discovered the burglary noticed these evidences and mentioned them in their telegram. Walter hurried back to New York to hush the servants up. He wasn't successful, and the fact that he had endeavored to cover something came to the attention of the police, and, inevitably, through them to the insurance company.

"Then Miss Manwaring turned out to be a young woman of uncommon character, less gullible than they had reckoned; also, I may say without undue self-conceit, they had reckoned without their hostess. I grew suspicious, and questioned Miss Manwaring; she was too honest to want to lie to me and too sensible to try.

"Meantime the need of money grew daily more urgent. They decided that Walter must pawn the jewels in Boston. They could be redeemed piece by piece when money was more plentiful. But the jewels were here, and Walter in New York, and it would be insane for him to come here and get them and then take them to Boston. In this emergency Adele went Walter one better in the matter of stupidity. She took Mr. Lyttleton into her confidence—and, crowning blunder! took his advice. Mr. Lyttleton conceived a magnificently romantic scheme. Walter

was to come to New Bedford, secretly hire a motor-boat, and be off the harbor here at a certain hour of night. Mr. Lyttleton was to leave the jewels in a designated spot at the foot of the cliffs. At an agreed signal between the yacht and Adele's bedchamber window Walter was to come in, at dead of night, and get the jewels, return to the mainland, discharge his boat, go to Boston, pawn the jewels, get the money, and be here in good time the next day.

"Walter, notified of this arrangement by letter to New York, fell in with it heart and soul. More stupidity, you see. Worse yet, he put it into effect. The arrangement was actually carried out last night. And again their luck turned against them. It so happened that both Miss Manwaring and Mr. Trego were sleepless last night and observed certain details of the conspiracy; and to make matters worse, it was the very night chosen by the thief to steal my jewels.

"When that came out they were all in panic—Walter, Adele, and Mr. Lyttleton. They put their empty heads together to think what was best to be done to avert suspicion from themselves. Miss Manwaring was the real stumbling-block. She knew far too much, and had proved rather difficult to manage. Among them they evolved another brilliant scheme: Miss Manwaring must be kidnaped and hidden away in a safe place until the trouble had blown over. Miss Manwaring having ostensibly confessed her guilt by flight, suspicion of complicity in the theft would be diverted from Walter, Adele, and Lyttleton; though they had positively no hand in the thing, they lacked the courage of their innocence, and they argued that, when in their own good time they set the girl at liberty, she would be wanted by the police and would never again dare show her face where it might be recognized. Not only stupid, you see, but cold-bloodedly selfish as well.

"Walter undertook to manage the business. He engaged a rascally chauffeur of his acquaintance and commandeered a closed car from my own garage, figuring that the kidnaping would be an accomplished fact long before the machine could be wanted, while its absence would never arouse comment on a fête night. He then induced Miss Manwaring to consent to meet him in a conveniently secluded spot

near the gates. I overheard something, enough to lead me to suspect there was something wrong afoot, and therefore persuaded Miss Manwaring to lend me this costume of hers and went to meet Walter in her stead. Before I guessed what was up a bag was thrown over my head, my hands and feet were bound, and I was lifted into the body of the car and driven away at such speed that Walter, who found out his mistake almost immediately, was unable to overtake me before I arrived at the spot chosen for Miss Manwaring's prison—a deserted shooting-lodge on the south shore.

"Meantime, when it was found that I had been kidnaped instead of the girl, and while Walter was in pursuit of me to make what amends he could, Adele and Mr. Lyttleton lost their heads entirely. Adele rushed round looking for Miss Manwaring, and when finally she found her, endeavored to induce her to run away on her own account. And Mr. Lyttleton (who, by the by, is leaving with Adele and Walter in the morning) on his own behalf arranged to direct suspicion of the robbery to Miss Manwaring, induced Mr. Mason to exceed my instructions and open the envelopes in my absence, and led Mr. Mason to Miss Manwaring's room, where, to his own stupendous surprise, there was found hidden one of the rings that had been stolen."

"What makes you think he was so much surprised?" Mr. Trego cut in, who had turned in his chair to eye Mr. Lyttleton in a most unpleasantly truculent fashion.

"Because he didn't know it was there."

"But somebody must have made the plant," Trego argued. "There's no question, I take it, of Miss Manwaring's innocence?"

"None whatever!" Mrs. Gosnold affirmed.

"Then why not Lyttleton as well as another?"

"That," Mrs. Gosnold said slowly, indeed reluctantly, "brings me to the fact that no confession has been made, as I had hoped it might be. That is to say, the jewels have not been restored. I am sorry. I have done all I could to protect the thief."

"You know—" Trego inquired.

"I saw the theft committed," said Mrs. Gosnold. "It was done not for gain, but for the sole purpose of securing Miss Manwaring's discharge—"

A short, sharp cry interrupted her, and in the momentary silence of astonishment that followed Mercedes Pride shut her eyes, sighed gently, slipped from her chair, and subsided to the floor in a dead faint.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### BREAKING JAIL

WITHIN five minutes Sally was back behind the locked door of her bedchamber, alone with the glowing exaltation of complete exoneration and triumph over the machinations of her ill-wishers, alone with what should naturally have been tingling satisfaction in consciousness of having administered yet another and (it was to be hoped) a final stinging snub to that animal of a Trego.

Yet her gratification in the memory of the latter event was singularly rapid, flat, and savorless.

They had been the last to leave the boudoir where, with the help of her maid, Mrs. Gosnold was preoccupied with effort to restore her kinswoman—that hapless victim of her own malevolence.

The others had been only too glad to disperse, following that diversion which freed them from the open contempt of their hostess, Sally and Trego. Lyttleton, indeed, had not hesitated to show his spirit by taking to his heels down the corridor to his quarters when Trego betrayed an inclination to follow him. And it was this circumstance which had led to the discomfiture of Trego.

"A fine young specimen!" Trego commented with some disappointment, lowering after the rapidly retreating figure. "But wait," he suggested ominously, "just wait till I catch him outside the house. I knew I did wrong to let him off so easy last night. But I'll make up for it, all right. Leave him to me!"

"I am not interested in your personal quarrels with Mr. Lyttleton," Sally told him frigidly. "Mine, if you please, I will settle for myself in my own way. When I desire your interference, I shall notify you. Till then—whatever the circumstances—I hope you will be good enough not to speak to me under any circumstances whatever."

With this she had left him dashed and staring.

Now, in retrospection, she was alter-



nately sorry that she had said as much and that she had not said more. He had deserved either the cut direct and absolute, or he had deserved a thoroughgoing, whole-hearted exposition of his own despicable perfidy.

She could never forgive him—and, what was worse, she could never forgive herself for the smart of her wounded pride when she recalled that shameful scene in the garden. She could not forgive herself for caring one way or the other. She could not forgive herself for admitting that she cared.

It was just this which rendered her position in Gosnold House positively untenable, however firmly it might seem to have been reestablished by the events of the last half-hour.

It was just this which kept the girl from her pillow, buoyed by a feverish excitement.

She could never stay at Gosnold House and continue on terms of any sort with Trego and suffer the airs with which Mrs. Artemas would treat her vanquished rival in the man's affections. Even though Sally had never been conscious of the rivalry nor in any way encouraged the putative prize.

It might seem ungrateful to Mrs. Gosnold; Sally couldn't help that, though she was sincerely sorry; the association simply must be discontinued.

And that, she declared in her solitude, was all there was about it.

By the time she had succeeded in composing a note which seemed sufficiently grateful in tone to excuse the pitiful inadequacy of her excuse for absconding—that she was “out of her element” on the island, an outsider, and didn’t “belong,” and never could—the chill light of early dawn had rendered the electrics garish.

She read the note over with hypercritical sensitiveness to its defects, but decided that it must do. Besides, she had used the last sheet of note-paper in the rack on her desk; more was not obtainable without a trip to the living-room. Then in desperation she appended, under the sign of the venerable P. S., a prayer that this might prove acceptable in lieu of more gracious leave-taking, addressed the envelope to Mrs. Gosnold, and left it sticking conspicuously in the frame of her dressing-mirror.

Studiously she reduced her traveling

gear to the simplest requisites; the hand-bag she took because she had a use for it, nothing less than to serve as a cover for the return of everything she wore.

She was determined to go out of this island world, whose ether was too rare for her vulgar lungs, with no more than she had brought into it.

At length the laggard hands of the clock were close together on the figure 6.

She rose, let herself out of the room, and by way of that memorable side door issued forth into a morning as rarely beautiful as ever that blessed island knew. It made renunciation doubly difficult. Yet Sally did not falter nor once look back.

Her way to the village wharf was shortest by the beach. None saw her stealing through the formal garden, with eyes averted from that one marble seat that was forever distinguished from all others in the world, and vanish over the lip of the cliff by way of its long, zigzag stairway. Few noticed her as she debouched from the beach into the village streets; her dress was inconspicuous, her demeanor even more than retiring.

Her hope was favored in that on this earlier trip of the boat there were few passengers other than natives of the island.

On the mainland she caught an accommodation train which wound a halting way through the morning and set her down in Providence late in the forenoon. Then ignorance of railroad travel made her choose another accommodation instead of an express which would have cost no more and landed her in New York an hour earlier.

Her flight was financed by a few dollars left over from her bridge winnings of the first day at Gosnold House after subsequent losses had been paid. Their sum no more than sufficed; when she had purchased a meager lunch at the station counter in New Haven she was penniless again; but for the clothes she wore she landed in New York even as she had left it.

The city received her with a deafening roar that seemed of exultation that its prey had been delivered unto it again.

The heat was even more oppressive than that of the day on which she had left—or perhaps seemed so only by contrast with the radiant coolness of the island air.

Avoiding Park Avenue, she sought the place that she called home by way of Lexington.



She went slowly, wearily, lugging her half-empty hand-bag as if it were a heavy burden.

At length, leaving the avenue, she paused a few doors west of the corner, climbed the weather-bitten steps to the brownstone entrance, and addressed herself to those three long flights of naked stairs.

The studio door at the top was closed and locked. The card had been torn from the tacks that held it to the panel.

Puzzled and anxious, she stooped and turned up a corner of the worn fiber mat—and sighed with relief to find the key in its traditional hiding-place.

But when she let herself in, it was to a room tenanted solely by seven howling devils of desolation.

Only the decrepit furniture remained; it had not been worth cartage or storage; every personal belonging of the other two girls had disappeared; Mary Warden had not left so much as a sheet of music, Lucy Spode had overlooked not so much as a hopeless sketch.

Yet Sally had no cause for complaint; they had forsaken her less indifferently than she had them; one or the other had left a newspaper, now three days old, propped up where she could not fail to see it on the antiquated marble mantel-shelf. In separate columns on the page folded outermost two items were encircled with rings of crimson water-color.

One, under the caption "News of Plays and Players," noted the departure for an opening in Atlantic City of the musical comedy company of whose chorus Mary Warden was a member.

The other, in the column headed "Marriages," announced tersely the nuptials of Lucy Spode and Samuel W. Meyerick. No details were given.

Forlornly Sally wandered to the windows and opened them to exchange the hot air of the studio for the hotter air of the back yards.

Then slowly she set about picking up the threads of her life.

Such clothing as she owned offered little variety for choice. She selected the least disreputable of two heavy, black winter skirts, a shirt-waist badly torn at the collar-band, her severely plain underclothing, coarse black stockings, and shoes that had been discarded as not worth another visit to the cobbler's.

When these had been exchanged for the

gifts of Mrs. Standish, Sally grimly packed the latter into the hand-bag and shut the latch upon them with a snap of despair.

Come evening, when it was dark enough, she would leave them at the door of the residence up the street, ring the bell, and run.

She sat a long hour, hands listless in her lap, staring vacantly out at that well-hated vista of grimy back yards, drearily reviewing the history of the last five days. She felt as one who had dreamed a dream and yet was not sure that she had waked.

Later she roused to the call of hunger, and foraged in the larder, or what served the studio as such, turning up a broken carton of Uneeda Biscuit and half a packet of black tea. There was an egg, but she refrained from testing it.

It never entered her weary head to imagine that the feet that pounded heavily on the stairs were those of anybody but the janitor; she was wondering idly if there was rent due, and if she would be turned out into the street that very night, and thinking it did not much matter, when the footfalls stopped on the threshold of the studio and she looked up into the face of Mr. Trego.

Surprise and indignation smote her with speechlessness, but her eyes were eloquent enough as she started up—and almost overturned the rickety table at which she had been dining.

But he was crassly oblivious to their message. Removing his hat, he mopped his brow, sighed, and smiled winningly.

"Hello!" he said. "You certainly did give me the deuce of a hunt. I wormed it out of Mrs. Gosnold that you inhabited a studio somewhere on this block, and I suppose I must have climbed thirty times three flights of stairs in the last hour."

She demanded in a low, tense voice: "Why have you followed me here?"

"Well," he protested, "Mrs. Gosnold sent me—and if she hadn't, I would have come anyway. I told you last night that I loved you. I haven't changed since then. And now that you're in a fix, whether or not of your own contriving—well, it isn't my notion of letting you pull out for yourself if you'll let me help—and that goes, even if you stick to it that you won't marry me."

"And Mrs. Artemas?" she inquired icily. "What does she think about your coming after me?"

He stared and laughed. "Oh, did you know about that? I hoped you didn't—"

"I saw you with her in your arms—"

"Yes," he agreed patiently. "She'd been laying for me for several weeks. I told you she was—don't you remember? Only, of course, I didn't name her. And last night, when I went back there looking for you, she cornered me; and while I was trying to be nice and explain I could never be anything more than a brother to her she burst out crying and threw herself into my arms and—what could a fellow do? I tried to make her behave, but before she would listen to reason those confounded people had to pop up. And, of course, she took advantage of that opening instant. But—great Scott!—you didn't suppose I was going to be that sort of a gentleman and let her get away with it, did you? So much in love with you I can hardly keep from grabbing you now! Not likely!"

She tried to answer him, but her traitorous voice broke, and before she could master it he had resumed.

"Mrs. Gosnold wants you back—sent me to say so—says she'll come after you if I fail to bring you."

"Oh, no!" she protested, trembling uncontrollably.

"You won't meet any of those folks. They're all going to-day. It's a new deal from a fresh deck, so to speak."

"No," she averred more steadily. "You told me I was foolish; you were right. I'm through with all that."

He came closer to her. "You needn't be," he said. "Don't damn Society just because you got in wrong at the first attempt. Try again. Let me try with you. I've got all the money there is, more or less. If you want a villa at Newport—"

"Oh, please, no! I tell you, I'm finished with all that forever."

"Well," he grinned fatuously, "what about a flat in Harlem?"

A little smile broke through her tears.

"Why must you go to such extremes?" she laughed brokenly. "Aren't there any more apartments to be had on Riverside Drive?"

THE END

NEXT MONTH'S NOVEL.—The December—Christmas—issue of THE MUNSEY will give anchorage to a splendid book-length novel, complete and unabridged:

## "THE BARGE OF DREAMS"

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It is a love story, but it deals with the war of ambition versus home and love, and is in no sense a sex story. Mr. Hughes feels that the people of the stage deserve a more important, respectful, impartial exploitation than they have had. They have been ridiculed as gipsies, satirized as egomaniacs, burlesqued as strutting clowns, but they have not often, if ever, been presented as they really are—to show the whole world how really human they are.

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